

Hyderabad

Images and Memories

50 Years

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DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI | FRIDAY 2 | FEBRUARY 2018

TANTEX

PREMIUM INNERWEAR

50 Years

VESTS | BRIEFS | GYM VESTS

For Enquiries :

0421 - 4333890

WEATHER



Max: 30°C
Min: 14°C
Rainfall: Nil

ASTROGUIDE

Hevilambi: Thai 20
Tithi: Thuvithiyai
Star: Magam
Rahukalam:
10.30 am to 12 noon
Yamagandam:
3 pm to 4.30 pm
PRAYERS
Fajar: 5.55 am
Jumma: 1.00 pm
Asar: 4.00 pm
Maghrib: 6.14 pm
Isha: 8.00 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.10 PM
SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.35 AM
MOONRISE TODAY 8.06 PM
MOONSET TOMORROW 7.57 AM

Centre tries to inflate Aadhaar saving figures: Counsel to SC

New Delhi: Even as senior counsel Shyam Divan maintained in the Supreme Court that the Centre has attempted to inflate the figures on savings due to ceding of Aadhaar for availing social security benefits, heated exchanges sparked up the debate on Thursday. A five judge Constitution bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices A.K. Sikri, A.M. Kanwilkar, D.Y.Chandrachud and Ashok Bhushan is hearing arguments in the Aadhaar case for the seven day.

Petrol bomb hurled at Suu Kyi's lakeside villa

Yangon: A petrol bomb was thrown at the lakeside Yangon compound of Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi today while she was away from her home, a government spokesman said. "It was a petrol bomb," spokesman Zaw Htay confirmed, without giving details on a possible motive for a small, but rare attack targeting the Myanmar democracy heroine. The petrol bomb caused minor damage. But the attack on the villa where Suu Kyi was held for long years of house arrest by the former junta is hugely symbolic. Suu Kyi has increasingly attracted the ire of the international community over her perceived failure to speak up on behalf of Myanmar's Rohingya Muslim community.

COUNTER POINT



There is a heavy demand for Governor posts!

Market report

GOLD
24 ct (1 gm): ₹3,093.00
22 ct (1 gm): ₹2,893.00
SILVER
Bar (1 Kg): ₹39,670.00
INDICES
Sensex 35,906.66 pts
Nifty 11,016.90 pts
EXCHANGE
US\$: ₹64.01 Euro: 79.79

WORLD

Trump lets protected Syrians stay longer

15

SPORT

Faf du Plessis ton in vain as India win

16

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Vol. 13 No. 308 Established 1938 | 32 PAGES | ₹ 3.00

RURAL INDIA IN POLL POSITION

■ FARM, EDUCATION, HEALTH IN FOCUS, LITTLE FOR MIDDLE CLASS | ■ I-T RATES UNCHANGED; ₹40,000 STANDARD DEDUCTION IS BACK | ■ LONG-TERM CAPITAL GAINS ON STOCK TRADING INTRODUCED

New Delhi, Feb. 1: The government on Thursday announced the "world's largest" health insurance scheme for India's 50 crore poor in its last full budget before general elections, focusing heavily on uplifting agriculture and rural sectors while paying little attention to the middle class.

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley presented the budget in Lok Sabha to repeated thumping of desks by treasury members led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who later described it as a vehicle to build a "new India." The budget is "farmer friendly, common citizen friendly, business environment friendly" and will add to "ease of living and ease of doing business," Modi said in a televised address.

With chaotic implementation of the Goods and Services Tax and demonetisation causing distress in the economy, Jaitley announced massive spending on rural and urban infrastructure as also lower tax rates for small and medium enterprises. While continuing the 10-15 per cent surcharge on super-rich, he raised the health and education cess, levied on all taxable income, to 4 per cent from 3 per cent at present. The opposition slammed the budget, with the Congress calling it "defeatist" and a "big letdown" while the Left parties dubbing it an election-minded "big jumla (rhetoric)." "It is a cam-

COSTLIER (IMPORTED GOODS)

● Cars, motorcycles, cellphones, gold, vegetable oils, etc.

CHEAPER (IMPORTED GOODS)

● Raw cashewnuts, solar tempered glass for manufacture of solar panels; raw materials, accessories for cochlear implants etc.

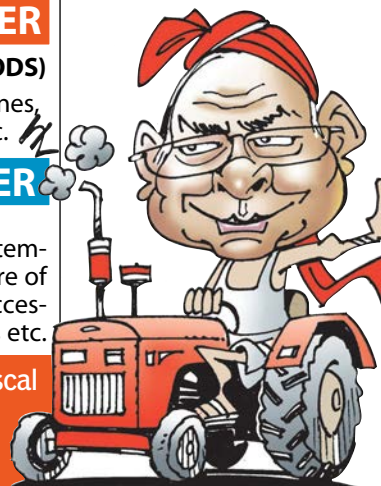
BUDGET A blend of fiscal prudence and economic needs.
— ARUN JAITLEY, FM



FREE GAS CONNECTIONS FOR WOMEN UNDER UJJWALA YOJANA WILL RISE TO 8 CRORE.

BUDGET REDUCES CONTRIBUTIONS FROM WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN EPF TO 8 PER CENT FROM 12 PER CENT FOR THE NEXT 3 YEARS.

37% INCREASE IN LOANS GIVEN TO WOMEN SELF-HELP GROUPS.



COMPANIES UNDER ₹250 CRORE TO BE TAXED 25% PAN MANDATORY FOR ANY ENTITY ENTERING INTO A FINANCIAL TRANSACTION OF ₹2.5 LAKH OR MORE.

>> E-ASSESSMENT OF I-T; NO PERSON-TO-PERSON CONTACT
>> EXEMPTION OF INTEREST INCOME FOR ELDERLY ON DEPOSITS WITH BANKS AND POST OFFICES.

>> DEFENCE BUDGET HIKED MARGINALLY TO ₹2.95 LAKH CRORE AGAINST LAST YEAR'S ₹2.74 LAKH CRORE.

>> SEAPLANE INVESTMENTS TO BE ENCOURAGED.

>> AIRPORT CAPACITY TO BE HIKED FOR 1 BN TRIPS A YEAR.

THIS BUDGET is farmer friendly, common citizen friendly, business environment friendly and will add to ease of living and ease of doing business.
— NARENDRA MODI, Prime Minister



■ CRYPTOCURRENCY LIKE BITCOIN NOT A LEGAL TENDER BUT CENTRE TO EXPLORE USE OF BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY PROACTIVELY TO USHER IN DIGITAL ECONOMY.

■ DEPARTMENT OF TELECOM WILL SUPPORT INDIGENOUS 5G TEST BED AT IIT, CHENNAI.

EYE ON POOR, ANGRY FARMERS

SANJAY BASAK | DC NEW DELHI, FEB. 1

With seven state elections slated to be held this year, and growing indications of voters' disenchantment with the BJP, especially in rural India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's last full-fledged Budget is designed with eyes firmly on the restless underprivileged and angry farmers.

Stepping up on the agenda of "empowering the poor", finance minister Arun Jaitley on Thursday unfurled, with aplomb, one of the biggest ever health care schemes that will cover, he said, nearly 50 crore underprivileged people.

The BJP hopes that its National Health Protection Scheme, which aims to offer health insurance of up to ₹5 lakh per year to 10 crore poor families, will draw them towards the party. With 30 per cent of India's population living below the poverty line, "the largest government-funded health insurance scheme to be implemented anywhere in the world" will go a long way in easing the heavy debt families incur because of their healthcare bills.

Agri credit target for FY'19 up 10% to ₹11 lakh crore

New Delhi, Feb. 1: In a major bonanza to farmers, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on Thursday announced fixing support price of Kharif crops like paddy at least 50 per cent higher than the cost of production, while raising farm credit target for the next fiscal by 10 per cent to ₹11 lakh crore.

Presenting the Union Budget 2018-19, Jaitley reiterated the government's commitment to welfare of farmers saying that the emphasis is to generate higher income for farmers. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a clarification call to double the farmers' income by 2022, he added. Jaitley said the government has decided to fix the minimum support price (MSP) of coming Kharif (summer sown) crops, which include maize, soyabean and pulses, at least one-and-half times the cost of production. ■ P6

TN, Southern Railway get peanuts

C.S. KOTTESWARAN | DC CHENNAI, FEB. 1

Tamil Nadu and Southern Railway got peanuts from the Union budget on Thursday. "Tamil Nadu is one of the leading states in paying GST and has the second largest GST database, but there is no state Centric allocation. We pay a lot of tax to the Centre but end without funds for the much-needed Chennai metro rail and the proposed AIIMS in TN, said a highly placed official at the secretariat.

The Centre has given impetus to boost the Mumbai and Bengaluru transport system by

The Mumbai and Bengaluru transport system got ₹27,000 crore but the Southern Railway involving three states got nothing in the Budget

announcing funds up to ₹27,000 crore but at the same time there is no reference about the southern railway that benefits three southern states. Chennai metro rail has been pleading with the Centre to

extend phase II of the delayed project, the official said. The only respite is that the farmers in TN will get the Central assistance schemes and the kisan credit card systems. The announcements related to the new coach factory at ICF Perambur and the establishment of an indigenous 5G test bed at IIT, Chennai is just a regular expansion programme, the official rued.

Terming the budget a big failure for the common man and the railway passengers, former railway minister A.K. Moorthy said that there was no clarity in the budget. Finance minister has

spoken about laying of new tracks but he has not clarified which state will get what.

Further there is no announcement on new trains and schemes that helps 2.5 crore daily rail passengers.

Meanwhile Southern Railway headquarters which used to celebrate railway budgets in the past by organising conferences, press meets remained quiet throughout the day and a press release compiled by the Press Information Bureau was re-released to remind that the union budget also had a few schemes for the Indian Railways.

₹5 lakh health cover per year to 10 crore poor families

DC CORRESPONDENTS NEW DELHI/CHENNAI, FEB. 1

Unveiling the world's largest government-funded healthcare programme, finance minister Arun Jaitley on Thursday announced the setting up of National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS) to offer coverage of up to ₹5 lakh per year to 10 crore poor and vulnerable families for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation.

Noting that only a "swasth Bharat" (healthy India) can be a "samridha Bharat" (prosperous India), Mr Jaitley said India cannot realise its demographic dividend without its citizens being healthy. The NHSP, he said, will cover approximately 50 crore people.

"This will be the world's largest government-funded healthcare programme. Adequate funds will be provided for smooth implementation

of this programme," the finance minister said.

Secondary medical care is provided by a specialist or facility upon referral by a primary care physician. Tertiary care is specialised consultative health care, usually for inpatients.

While not specific allocation has been made for the scheme, at the current commercial rate of premium, NHPS could cost the government up to ₹1.5 lakh crore.

Cong sweeps Rajasthan bypolls, shock for BJP

DC CORRESPONDENT JAIPUR, FEB. 1

Dealing a huge blow to its national president Amit Shah's wish of making the party invincible in Rajasthan, the BJP has lost by-polls two Lok Sabha seats and an assembly constituency in Rajasthan. All three seats were previously held by the ruling party.

The defeat coming just 10 months before assembly polls is also a personal setback for CM Vasundhara Raje for whom nothing seems to have worked. She single ha-

ndedly ran the campaign; made many visits even before poll dates were announced, held closed door meetings with people on caste lines and went on spree to announce sops and lay foundation stones.

Yet, the ruling party not just failed to retain a single seat clearly suggesting a huge anti incumbency against her government while the Congress led by young state president Sachin Pilot has been able to use it to its advantage. What must be heartening for the Pilot is that the party known for st-

rong rural base is now also gaining in urban areas as shown by the latest results.

In Mandalgarh, the BJP candidate Shakti Singh Hada lost by nearly 13,000 votes in three cornered contest where Congressman Gopal Malviya rebel took more than 40,000 votes.

On the prestigious Ajmer seat, BJP failed to cash in on sympathy wave as Ramswaroop Lamba lost by more than 84,000 votes just 6 months after his father Prof. Sanwar Lal Jat's death who had won this seat from Pilot by 1.71 lakh votes in 2014.

TMC wins 2 bypolls in West Bengal

Kolkata, Feb. 1: Trinamool Congress on Thursday made a clean sweep in the by-elections to Uluberia Lok Sabha and Noapara assembly seats, while BJP finished second increasing its vote share.

CPI(M)-led Left Front was pushed to the third position while Congress candidates suffered the ignominy of

losing security deposits in both the seats, including Noapara which it won in 2016. TMC candidate Sajda Ahmed trounced Anupam Mallick of BJP by over 4.74 lakh votes in Uluberia Lok Sabha seat in Howrah district. She has secured 7,67,219 votes as against 2,93,018 votes bagged by the BJP candidate. ■ P15

CJI makes allocation of work for judges, roster system from Feb. 5

J. VENKATESAN | DC NEW DELHI, FEB. 1

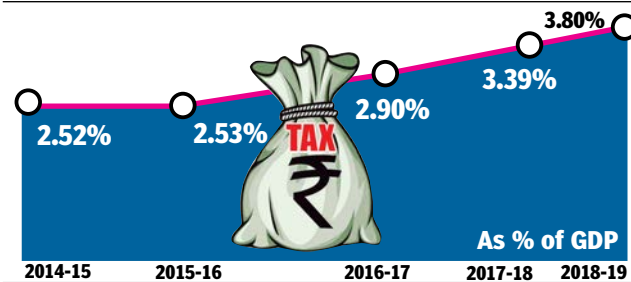
In an apparent move to put an end to the controversy raised by four senior-most judges, the Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra on Thursday made public and transparent the new roster system from February 5 on allocation of work to the 12 different benches including the CJI, who will hear all-important PILs.



The new roster system has been notified in the Supreme Court website, describing the work allocated to each of the benches headed by the CJI and justices Chelameswar,

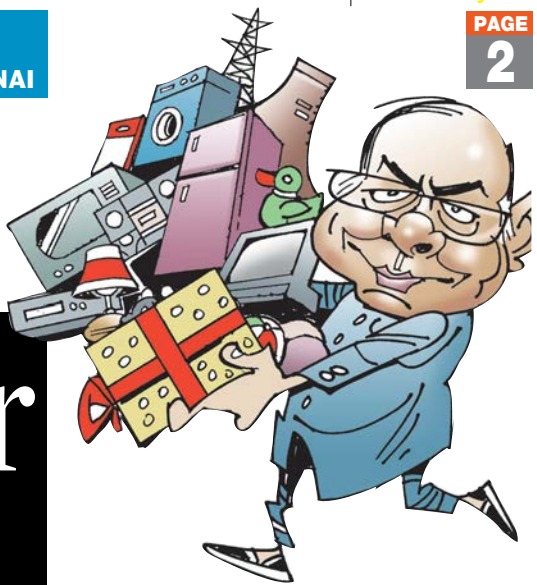
Ranjan Gogoi, Madan Lokur, Kurian Joseph, A K Sikri, S A Bobde, R K Agrawal, N V Ramana, Arun Mishra, A K Goel and Rohinton Nariman. This new roster will apply to the fresh cases and not the existing cases.

Till now though daily, weekly and advance lists of cases are published and put on the website, the litigants are not aware before which judge their cases will be listed. ■ P15



>> STEADY GROWTH | The personal income-tax collection has seen a steady growth. The tax collection has nearly doubled over the last seven years from **1.95% in 2011-12 to 3.8%** in 2018-19 after income-tax department used information technology to reduce tax evasion.

₹5,29,000cr
IS THE TOTAL REVENUE ESTIMATES EXPECTED TO BE COLLECTED THROUGH INCOME TAX



QUOTE UNQUOTE

The extension of corporate tax rate of 25% to companies with the turnover up to 250 crore till last year, will have a positive impact on the health of corporate India irrespective of any sector.

- R. PURAVANKARA, MD, Puravankara Limited

The FM providing more tax benefits to senior citizens experiencing rising inflationary costs is a step in the right direction. And the introduction of a LTCG Tax of 10% should be digested easily given the buoyancy.

- PREETHA REDDY, Vice-chairman, Apollo Hospitals

The corporate tax reduction is a positive move.

- NIKUNJ GHODAWAT, CFO, CleanMax Solar

SALARIED PEOPLE LEFT HIGH & DRY

■ ₹40,000 standard deduction doesn't help save much

FALAKNAAZ SYED | FC MUMBAI, FEB. 1

The Union budget 2018-19 was a disappointment for India's salaried/middle class as it failed to provide any relief except some token announcements despite their contributing the most towards the government's personal income-tax kitty.

So, while the Budget did not change the personal income tax slabs, it announced a standard deduction of ₹40,000 for salaried employees.

It was a perfect example of giving from one hand and taking it away from the other as the existing benefit of transport allowance of ₹19,200 and medical reimbursement of ₹15,000 under Section 17(2) were withdrawn as per the Finance Bill.

Thus, giving a net benefit of only ₹5,800 to the salaried class while for those in 30 per cent tax bracket would get a benefit of only ₹1,950.

Tax experts said that while the standard deduction does reduce administrative hassles to a great extent, in reality it is not much.

STANDARD DEDUCTION SAVINGS

SALARIED TAXPAYERS, WHO ARE NOT SENIOR CITIZENS, CAN SAVE ON TAX DEPEND-ING ON THEIR TAX BRACKETS.

NO TAX: Till ₹2,90,000 (basic limit of ₹2.5 lakh + ₹40,000)

5% Till ₹5,40,000 (₹5 lakh + ₹40,000)

20% Till ₹10,40,000 (₹10 lakh + ₹40,000)

30% Income more than ₹10,40,000

In addition to income-tax, a 4 per cent cess would be levied. A surcharge of ₹10 per cent is payable by all those having an income of over ₹50 lakh.

Another disappointment for the salaried class was an increase in existing three per cent education cess that would be replaced by a four per cent "Health and Education Cess" to be levied on the tax payable.

"There is a general perception in the society that individual business persons have better income as compared to

salaried taxpayer.

As against this, 1.88 crore individual business taxpayers including professionals, who filed their returns for the same assessment year paid total tax of ₹48,000 crore which works out to an average tax payment of ₹25,753 per individual business taxpayer," said Mr Jaitley. According to him, the total number of salaried employees and pensioners who will benefit from the standard deduction increase is around 2.5 crores.

Akhil Chandna, director, Grant Thornton India said, "The FM enthused the salaried class by reintroducing standard deduction of up to ₹40,000, but soon gave it away by withdrawing current exemptions on transport allowance (₹19,200 per annum) and medical reimbursement (₹15,000 per annum), leaving only a marginal benefit."

"Overall, together with the additional education cess of 1 per cent, there isn't too much for the salaried class in this budget," added Chandna.

Big tax relief for seniors

DC CORRESPONDENT with agency inputs NEW DELHI, FEB. 1

Announcing a series of benefits for senior citizens, finance minister Arun Jaitley on Thursday said the exemption limit on income from interest for them has been raised five times to ₹50,000 per year.

At the same time, the Union finance minister raised limit of deduction for health insurance premium and medical expenditure to ₹50,000 from ₹30,000 under section 80D.

"All senior citizens will now be able to claim benefit of deduction up to ₹50,000 per annum in respect of

any health insurance premium and/or any general medical expenditure incurred," he said while presenting the Union Budget for 2018-19.

Besides, the Budget has increased the limit of deduction for medical expenditure in respect of certain critical illness to ₹1 lakh in respect of all senior citizens, under section 80DDB.

The finance minister also proposed to extend the Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana up to March 2020. "The current investment limit will be increased to ₹15 lakh from the existing limit of ₹7.5 lakh per senior citizen," Mr Jaitley said.

READING THE FINE PRINT

FC BUREAU NEW DELHI, FEB. 1

As always, there are hidden bombs within the fine print. Deductions for instance in respect of certain incomes will not be allowed unless return is filed by due date. The existing provisions contained in the section 80AC of the Act provide that no deduction would be

admissible under section 80 1A or section 80 1AB or section 80 1B or section 801C or section 80 1D or section 80 1E, unless the return of income is furnished on or before the due date specified under sub section (1) of section 139 of the Act. This burden is not cast upon assessee claiming deductions under several other similar provisions.

LTCG tax on stocks stages a comeback

FC BUREAU MUMBAI, FEB. 1

While the government has doled out sops for some sector, it came down hard on a few others. For equity investors there were negative surprises as the government re-introduced long-term capital gains (LTCG) tax after a gap of 14 years. The budget proposed to levy 10 per cent LTCG on profits of more than ₹1 lakh on shares and other equity-oriented investments like units of mutual funds.

Till now, such gains were entirely exempt from taxes, while a flat 15 per cent rate was applicable on short-term capital gains profits made on investments held for less than a year.

While this move will enable the government to collect tax on sale of securities of listed entity, there are two important aspects on sale of securities which the government failed to consider including non-levy of the securities transaction tax (which was introduced in the finance Budget of 2004 in lieu of the tax on long term capi-

tal gain), and making available the indexation benefit on securities held for more than one year.

Shanti Ekambaram, President - Consumer Banking, Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd said, "the much-discussed and awaited Long Term Capital Gains tax was also announced. In what is a fair move, the 10% LTCG tax is applicable on an incremental basis and all holdings as on Jan. 31, 2018 would be grandfathered and valued at prices on that day. However, Securities Transaction Tax was not reduced.

The introduction of dividend distribution tax on equity mutual funds was a surprise."

There was disappointment for corporate sector. While the budget also has addressed the woes of MSME segment by extending the concessional tax of 25 per cent to MSMEs up to ₹250 cr turnover, the large corporates will not get that benefit.

Corporate sector was expecting that the government would reduce the corporate tax rate, in line with what was announced three years ago.

A SLEW OF IMPORTED ITEMS INCLUDING CARS AND MOBILE PHONES WILL COST MORE

COSTLIER

CHEAPER

■ Cars and motorcycles - Vehicles imported into India through kits for assembly will get costlier with custom duty going up to 15% from 10%. This will impact Mercedes-Benz, BMW, Audi, Volvo, Jaguar Land Rover, Harley-Davidson, Triumph, who have set up assembly plants

■ Mobile phones ■ Silver ■ Gold

■ Vegetable, fruit juices, including orange and cranberry

■ Sunglasses ■ Miscellaneous food preparations other than soya protein ■ Perfumes and toilet waters

■ Sunscreen, suntan, manicure, pedicure preparations

■ Preparations for oral dental hygiene, denture fixative pastes and powders; dental floss

■ Pre-shave, shaving or after-shave preparations, deodorants, bath preparations, depilatories, perfumery

■ Scent sprays and similar toilet sprays

■ Truck and Bus radial tyres ■ Silk Fabric ■ Footwear

■ Coloured gemstones ■ Diamonds ■ Imitation jewellery

■ Smart watches/wearable devices

LCD/ LED TV panels ■ Furniture ■ Mattresses ■ Lamps

■ Articles and equipment for sports or outdoor games, swimming pools and paddling pools

■ Wrist watches, pocket watches, clocks

■ Tricycles, scooters, pedal cars, wheeled toys, dolls carriages, dolls, toys, puzzles of all kinds

■ Video game consoles

■ Cigarette and other lighters, candles

■ Kites ■ Edible/vegetable oils such as olive oil, groundnut oil

LTCG Tax may hit investments

Mumbai, Feb. 1: The move to impose tax on long-term capital gains as well as dividend distribution could pose as a small hurdle for investment flows into the mutual funds, industry experts said.

According to the Budget tabled on Thursday in the Parliament, investors will have to pay 10 per cent tax on distributed income from equity-oriented mutual funds.

The Budget also proposed to introduce 10 per cent tax on long-term capital gains (LTCG) from stock markets, exceeding ₹1 lakh.

Noting that 10 per cent tax on the LTCG "poses a small hurdle in raising assets for the mutual fund equity schemes Mahindra Asset Management Company CEO and managing director Ashutosh Bishnoi, said "it also has the effect of bringing in a sense of long-termness in the investments made in such schemes."

"However, the government should look into the possibility that people may use ULIP of life insurance to avoid this tax,"

Bishnoi said.

Morningstar Investment Adviser India's Kaustubh Belapurkar said that introduction of a 10 per cent dividend distribution tax "may impact flows into funds where investors were primarily entering with the expectations of regular dividends".

"In fact dividend schemes are now slightly disadvantaged as opposed to growth schemes as LTCG below ₹1 lakh is exempt from tax," Belapurkar said.

While he was wary of the capital gains introduction, Motilal Oswal AMC's chief executive Aashish Somaiya said he is "pleasantly surprised with the nuanced and well-considered implementation".

"Protecting all past gains up until January 31 was the right way to implement the same," Somaiya added.

On an optimistic note, Somaiya said that dividend distribution tax on equity-oriented mutual funds will help stop mis-selling of balanced funds that declare a monthly dividend.

— PTI

BUDGET IS A BIT TAXING FOR CORPORATES

PRAVEEN WILLIAM
Partner, Indirect Tax, KPMG

True to the expectations, the budget turned out to be a bonanza for rural India. The government has earmarked several schemes which will give an impetus to agriculture, health and education sectors. The overarching theme of the budget was that of social welfare, or as the Prime Minister has put it more eloquently - 'ease of living'. While the corporate sector, would welcome 'ease of living', the 'ease of doing business' still remains its primary demand.

This budget provided a substantial cut in corporate tax rate from 30% to 25% for domestic companies having turnover below Rs 250 crore in FY 2016-17. Considering that countries around the world are in a competitive mindset to attract investment by reducing

corporate tax rates, this move would benefit MSMEs which are competing globally.

The government has introduced tax on long term capital gains on listed equity shares and equity oriented mutual funds for the first time - which is likely to have ramifications for all tax payers. While the move is no doubt intended to widen the tax base and divert financial resources to other priority sectors - the effects of this move on India's robust markets remain to be seen.

From an indirect tax perspective, given that the GST Council is still in the mode of deliberating certain changes to the GST law and procedures - this budget has not flagged off broad measures concerning the GST. However, several changes have occurred relating to customs

● **The past year saw India climbing several notches in the 'ease of doing business' rankings. In this context, corporates were optimistic that the government may take bolder measures to consolidate the strengthening trends.**

● **However, it appears that the emphasis of economic gears seems to be tilted towards social changes. Perhaps after the 'aam aadmi' is taken care of, India Inc. will also have its day.**

law and administration. The most significant of these is the introduction of the Social Welfare Surcharge - which will subsume the existing education cess and will be charged at

10% on basic customs duty. The surcharge will make imported goods a little dearer for the general populace and importers alike.

The government has also chosen to levy higher rates of basis customs duty on certain specified goods including electronic goods - notably mobile phones, televisions, automobile parts, etc. which are chargeable now at 15% or 20%. Parts of electronic goods will also be chargeable at enhanced rates. While the increase in rates may seem extortionate on the face of it, the rationale appears to be to incentivise domestic manufacturing - particularly in the electronics segment where India has strong domestic demand. Regrettably, the government has also not addressed the issue of in-bond sales - as the

value prescribed for the purposes of calculation of IGST has been pegged on import or sale value, whichever is higher. It is expected that the GST law is amended to grant exemption on such sales.

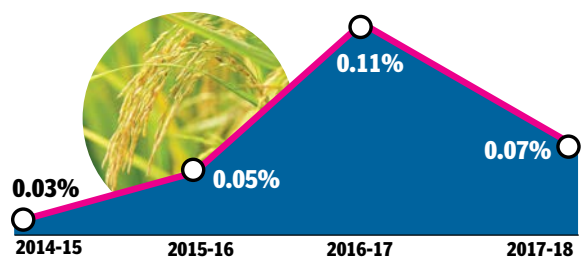
The past year saw India climbing several notches in the 'ease of doing business' rankings. In this context, corporates were optimistic that the government may take bolder measures to consolidate the strengthening trends. However, it appears that the emphasis of economic gears seems to be tilted towards social changes. Perhaps after the 'aam aadmi' is taken care of, India Inc. will also have its day. The budget changes, which are in the right direction, must however be well implemented and further accelerated.

The government has also chosen to levy higher rates of basis customs duty on certain specified goods including electronic goods - notably mobile phones, televisions, automobile parts, etc. which are chargeable now at 15% or 20%.

NIRMALA SAID THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION HAD RECENTLY CONDUCTED A MAJOR DEFENCE INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT MEET IN CHENNAI IN JANUARY THIS YEAR WITH HUGE PARTICIPATION FROM DEFENCE INDUSTRIES, INCLUDING MSMEs FROM CHENNAI, MYSORE, COIMBATORE, SALEM, TIRUCHIRAPPALLI AND FROM OTHER PLACES AS WELL

owners.”

Luckily though, Tamil Nadu did find a couple of mentions in this year's Central budget. Mr. Jaitley announced an outlay of Rs.7, 148 crore for the textile sector in 2018-19, which should bring some cheer to the hosiery and garment hub of Tirupur, the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Perambur, Chennai, a legacy of the Kamaraj era, to soon turn out state-of-the-art 'Train sets', and IIT-Madras to be made the 'test bed' for developing indigenous '5G' wireless technologies.



Budget takes poll route

FC BUREAU
NEW DELHI

Stamping that the road to power for the second term in New Delhi will lead through villages, Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the last budget before the general elections 2019 promised to end farmer's perennial distress.

Aware of the wrath of rural voters in recently concluded Gujarat elections, finance minister Arun Jaitley left no stone unturned to please this segment in his budget for 2018-19. In fact, more than half of Jaitley's one hour and fifty minute budget speech was devoted to programmes for the welfare of farmers and the rural community.

So the finance minister has not only given ear to the suggestions to raise MSP on all crops but has also tasked Niti Aayog put in place a fool-proof mechanism in consultation with central and state governments enabling farmers to get adequate price for their produce.

In a major bonanza to farmers, Jaitley has also proposed hiking the agricultural credit target for the next fiscal by Rs 1 lakh crore to a whopping Rs 11 lakh crore. The target was Rs 8.5 lakh crore in 2014-15 and has been gradually increasing under the NDA government.

Also, the allocation for the food-processing ministry has been doubled to support the sector sector that is at the cusp of next wave of growth with investment of over \$ 18 billion expected over next four years.

Government is committed for the welfare of farmers. For decades, country's agriculture policy and programme had remained production centric. We have sought to affect a paradigm shift. Honourable Prime Minister gave a clarion call to double farmers' income by 2022 when India celebrates its 75th year of independence. Our emphasis is on generating higher incomes for farmers," Jaitley said in his budget speech.

Shares of agriculture-related stocks surged up to 10 per cent on Thursday with FMs clear focus on strengthening agricultural and rural economy.

STEPS PLANNED

AGRICULTURE MINISTRY will reorient ongoing programmes to promote cluster-based horticulture production.

SUPPORT PRICE of Kharif crops, like paddy, fixed at least 50 per cent higher than the cost of production.

THE FINANCE minister has promised to invest more money in irrigation schemes that use solar power to pump groundwater to the surface.

FIGURE THIS

₹11 lakh cr
Institutional credit to agriculture to be raised to

2022

The year by which the government wants to double the farmers' income.



» FARMERS RESCUE Crop insurance has been devised for protecting farmers from vagaries of monsoon. The government has allocated 0.03% of GDP towards crop insurance in 2014-15, and increased it in next two years. The allocation has come down in 2017-18 as percentage of GDP

PLANTING GROWTH

THE GOVERNMENT HAS PROMISED CRORES OF RUPEES TO DEVELOP POOR RURAL AREAS AND HELP STRUGGLING FARMERS IN ITS ANNUAL BUDGET.

CURRENT PROBLEMS

THE GOVERNMENT had promised in the previous budget to double farmer incomes in the next five years and bring 10 million households out of

poverty by 2019.

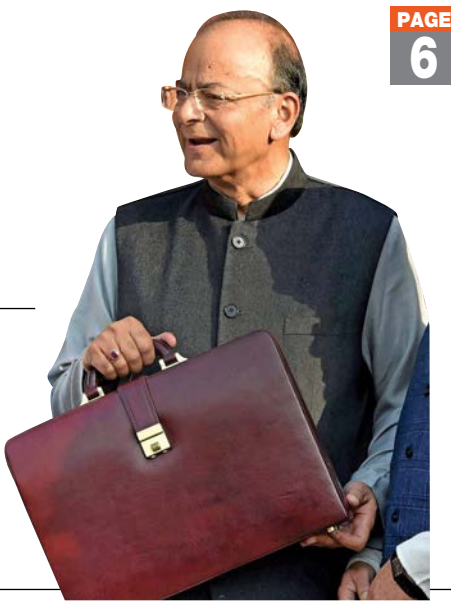
BUT MANY still live and work in near penury at the mercy of loan sharks and a harsh climate, and rural disaffection has stoked protests and a rise

in farmer suicides in recent years.

ACCESS To water is particularly problematic in the country, where less than half of all agricultural land is irrigated.

₹55,000cr

IS THE TOTAL AMOUNT PROPOSED TO BE SPENT FOR MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT



TENDERS / NOTICES

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

Notice Inviting E-Tender
Tender No.M/TRD/29/OT/16-17/R2, 17-18/R3, 4R2 & 9
Dated 31.01.2018
For and on behalf of the President of India, The Divisional Railway Manager/ Traction Distribution Branch, Chennai Division, Southern Railway, Chennai - 600 003 invites ONLINE tender from the experienced Contractors for the following works as per tender notice given in our e-tender portal www.irops.gov.in. The tenderer(s) / Contractor(s) intending to apply for e-tender for TRD / WORKS in Chennai Division, need to get enrolled in the e-tender portal www.irops.gov.in and only online tenders will be accepted.

Sl.No.	Tender No. & Name of Work				
1.	Tender No.M/TRD/29/OT/16-17/R3 Hiring of 1 No. of multi utility pick up Road vehicle for transporting men and materials along with driver for a period of 12 months for the use of PSI Depot at Tambaram under the jurisdiction of ADEE / TRD / TBM covered between Chennai Beach - Villupuram Section in Chennai Division.				
2.	Tender No.M/TRD/29/OT/17-18/R3 Relocating of tilted / leaned masts / structures on account of flood and soil erosion in critical locations - 125 Nos. in Chennai Division.				
3.	Tender No.M/TRD/29/OT/17-18/R2 OHE modification works in connection with electrification of Anna Nagar and ICF yard with PSI switching arrangements in Chennai Division.				
4.	Tender No.M/TRD/29/OT/17-18/R9 Provision of Auxiliary Transformers with all Accessories in connection with Replacement of Route Relay Interlocking system with Electronic Interlocking at Jolarpettai Junction in Chennai Division.				
No.	Approximate Cost of Work (₹)	Cost of Tender Form (₹)	Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	Closing Date of E-Tender (at 14.00 Hrs.)	Completion Period of the Work (in Months)
1	4,81,464.00	1,120/-	9,630/-	07.03.2018	Twelve
2	33,79,262.00	3,360/-	67,590/-	07.03.2018	Twelve
3	31,44,321.80	3,360/-	62,890/-	07.03.2018	Twelve
4	40,55,534.60	3,360/-	81,120/-	07.03.2018	Twelve

Website Particulars www.irops.gov.in
The detailed terms and conditions are available in the Website.
Divisional Railway Manager, Traction Distribution Branch, Chennai Division, Chennai - 3.

CITY UNION BANK LTD.

Administrative Office : No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar, Kumbakonam - 612 001.
Phone : 0435-2402322, 2401622 Fax : 0435-2431746

RE-TENDER-CUM-AUCTION SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

The following properties mortgaged to City Union Bank Limited will be sold in Tender-cum-Public Auction by the Authorised Officer of the Bank, under Rule 8 (6) & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 under the SARFAESI Act, 2002, for recovery of a sum of **Rs. 72,51,703/- (Rupees Seventy Two Lakh Fifty One Thousand Seven Hundred and Three Only)** as on 04-12-2017 together with further interest to be charged from 05-12-2017 onwards and other expenses, due from the borrowers / guarantors No.1) M/s. Sri Vari Caterers, No.9, Jawasanth Nagar Extension, Mogappair West, Chennai - 37. Also at M/s. Sri Vari Caterers, No.47, 1st Floor, PH Road, Nerukundam, Chennai-600 107. No.2) Mr. B. Prathap, S/o. S. Baskar Rao, No.9, Jawasanth Nagar Extension, Mogappair West, Chennai-37. Also at Mr. B. Prathap, S/o. S. Baskar Rao, No. 43/19, 6th Block, Sri Apartments, Mogappair East, Chennai - 37. No.3) Mrs. P. Harini, W/o. B. Prathap, No.9, Jawasanth Nagar Extension, Mogappair West, Chennai - 37. No.4) Mr. S. Baskar Rao, S/o. R. Sarveswara Rao, No.43/19, 6th Block, Sri Apartments, Mogappair East, Chennai - 600 037. Also at Mr. S. Baskar Rao, S/o. R. Sarveswara Rao, No.9, Jawasanth Nagar Extension, Mogappair West, Chennai - 37. Also at Mr. S. Baskar Rao, S/o. R. Sarveswara Rao, Flat No.S-11, Second Floor, No. 135, Dharmapada Nagar, Appayakam, Chennai - 600 077. No.5) Mrs. B. Gokila, W/o. S. Baskar Rao, No.43/19, 6th Block, Sri Apartments, Mogappair East, Chennai - 600 037. Also at Mrs. B. Gokila, W/o. S. Baskar Rao, No.13/5, Dharmapada Nagar, Appayakam, Chennai - 600 077.

Immovable Properties Mortgaged to our Bank

Schedule-A (Properties owned by Mr. S. Baskar Rao, S/o. R. Sarveswara Rao)
Item - 1: In Tiruvallur District, Ambattur Taluk, in Appayakam Village in the approved layout named as "Dharma Nagar" (CMDA Approved Layout PPDILO No.81/2005), comprising S.No. 262/1 (Part), Plot No. 13 measuring an extent of 2,373 Sq.ft., bounded on: North by: 24 Feet Road, South by: Plot No.12, East by: Plot No.14, West by: 24 Feet Road. Measurements: East to West on the Northern side - 39'3", East to West on the Southern side - 49'3", North to South on the Eastern side - 49'3", North to South on the Western side - 39'3" (North & West 14'0") in all totalling 2,373 Sq.ft. Item: 2: 579 Sq.ft. undivided Share out of the property described in item 1 above. Item: 3: Flat No.E in Block No."A" in Second Floor measuring 1,060 Sq.ft. of Plinth area including common areas in the building constructed in item 1 above situated within the Sub-Registration District of Ambattur and Registration District of Chennai North.

Reserve Price : Rs.29,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Nine Lakh Only)

Schedule-B (Property owned by Mr. S. Baskar Rao, S/o. R. Sarveswara Rao)

All that piece and portion of H.L.G. Flat No.19, in Second Floor, in Block No.43, comprised in S.No.344/1 (Part) in Mogappair Village in Ambattur Taluk, Tiruvallur District, Bounded on: North by: Road and Nursery, South by: Flat No.43/20, East by: Scheme Boundary, West by: Flat No. 43/18. Measurements: 747.78 Sq.ft. metre of plinth area together with undivided share to an extent of 68.54 Sq.ft. metre in the land situated within the Sub-Registration District of Komur and Registration District of Chennai North.

Reserve Price : Rs.38,00,000/- (Rupees Thirty Eight Lakh Only)

AUCTION DETAILS

Date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale	Venue
22-02-2018	City Union Bank Limited, Appayakam Branch, D.No.6284, Thiruvarkadu Main Road, Appayakam - 600 077, Telephone No.044-26823033, Cell No. 9345439768.

Terms and Conditions of Tender-cum-Auction Sale:

(1) The intending bidders should be present in person for the auction and participate personally and give a declaration in writing to the effect that he/she is bidding for himself/herself. (2) The intending bidders may obtain the Tender Forms from The Manager, City Union Bank Limited, Appayakam Branch, D.No.6284, Thiruvarkadu Main Road, Appayakam - 600 077. (3) The intending bidders should submit their bids only in the Tender Form prescribed in sealed envelopes addressed to The Authorised Officer, City Union Bank Ltd., together with a Pay Order / Demand Draft for an EMD of 10% of the Reserve Price, drawn in favour of "City Union Bank Ltd.", on or before 12.00 Noon on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. (4) For inspection of the property and other particulars, the intending purchaser may contact Telephone No.044-26823033, Cell No. 9345439768. (5) The properties are sold on "As-is-where-is" and "As-is-what-is" basis. (6) The sealed tenders will be opened in the presence of the attending bidders at 1.00 p.m. on the date of Tender-cum-Auction Sale hereby notified. Though in general the sale will be by way of closed tenders, the Authorised Officer may, at his sole discretion, conduct an Open Auction among the interested bidders who desire to quote a bid higher than the one received in the closed tender process, and in such an event, the sale shall be conferred on the person making highest bid. The sale, however, is subject to confirmation of City Union Bank Limited. (7) The successful bidder shall have to pay 25% (inclusive of EMD paid) of the sale amount immediately on completion of sale and the balance amount of 75% within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale, failing which the initial deposit of 25% shall be forfeited. (8) The Sale Certificate will be issued by the Authorised Officer in favour of the successful purchaser only after receipt of the entire sale consideration within the time limit stipulated herein. (9) The successful purchaser shall bear the charges/fees payable for conveyance, such as stamp duty, registration fee etc., as applicable under law. (10) The successful bidder should pay the statutory dues (like house tax, electricity charges and others), TDS, if any, due to Government, Government Undertaking and local bodies. (11) The Authorised Officer shall have all the powers to accept or reject the bids or postpone or cancel the sale without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Place : Kumbakonam, Date : 01-02-2018 **Authorised Officer**

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

Tender for Miscellaneous works
Tender Notice No.-SNT-RE-DNR-96
Date: 23.01.2018

Tender Notice, Open E-tenders in single packet system are invited by Chief Project Director, Railway Electrification, Danapur for & on behalf of the President of India for the works of:-

S.No. : 1. Name of the work with its Location : Work of trenching, laying of underground signalling cables/ power cable, casting of foundations, supply of certain equipment / materials, erection of apparatus cases, fixing of equipment, wiring, testing & commissioning in connection with modification of Panel Interlocking at stations, MACLS at LC Gate in Raxaul - Sagauli - Narkatiganj - Valmikinagar section of East Central Railway under Deputy Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer, Railway Electrification, Danapur to suit 25 K.V. AC Traction with following details : i) RE Modification of existing Panel at 14 stations. ii) RE modification of existing MACLS at 11 LC gate. **S.No. : 2.** Approximate Cost of work: Rs. 49199059.76 (Rs. Four crore ninety one lakh ninety nine thousand five hundred and ninety six only). **S.No. : 3.** Earnest Money : Rs. 396000.00 (Rs. Three lakh ninety six thousand only). **S.No. : 4.** Tender closing date and time : 05.03.2018 up to 12.00 hrs. **S.No. : 5.** Website particular and notice board location where complete details of tender can be seen etc. : (<http://www.irops.gov.in>); Notice Board at the office of Chief Project Director, Railway Electrification, Danapur, Near Jagjeevan Stadium, P.O.: Khagaul, District : Patna, PIN-801105. **NOTE** :- Original/revised bids are to be submitted online up to closing date and time on IREPS website only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be summarily rejected. Tenderer should get the digital signing certificate and register them on this website to participate in the tender.
Dy. CST/RE/ Danapur
PR/1624/RE/S&T/17-18/48

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE
Tender Notice No. RE-DNR-Engg-Gr-203-VT-06

On behalf of the President of India, Chief Project Director (Engg), Railway Electrification, Danapur, invites E-tender for the following work from experienced, financially and technically sound contractors, to be opened on 27.02.2018.

1. Name of the work & its location :- Construction of 1 No OHE-Cum-PSI Depot, 1 No AEE office, 2 Nos. Tower Wagon Shed with siding at Kapurpura and Sagauli Station, 4 Units Ty II, 4 units Ty III & 1 unit Ty IV Staff Quarters along with all ancillary works viz. Earth Work, Boundary Wall, Approach Road, Drains, Pipeline & Sanitary Work etc. at Sagauli Station in connection with Railway Electrification of MFP-SGL-VKNR including SGL-RXL Section in Gr. 203 in Samastipur division of E.C.Railway. **2. Approximate cost of the work** :- ₹6.34,88,394.73. **Earnest Money to be deposited**:- ₹4,67,450.00. **4. Date for submission of the tender and opening of Tender** :- For submission:- From 13.02.2018 & Up to 11:00 Hours on 27.02.2018. Tender will be opened at 11:30 Hrs on 27.02.2018. **5. Website Particulars, Notice Board location where complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender issued etc.** : www.irops.gov.in; Notice board location & Add. of the office :- Office of the Chief Project Director (Engg), Railway Electrification, Danapur, (Near Jagjeevan Stadium), PO-Khagaul, Patna-801105, (Bihar)

Chief Project Director (Engg), Railway Electrification, Danapur
PR/1647/RE/ENGG/T/17-18/48

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

OPEN TENDER
ON LINE (E-TENDERING)

The Dy. Chief Engineer (BRL), E.C. Railway Hajipur is inviting online (E-Tendering) Open Tender for and on behalf of the President of India from reputed contractor with experience, financial capability including those registered/working with Railway/Irrigation/CPWD/MES or any other public sector undertaking for the following work :-

Tender Notice No. BRL/DNR/EOT/18/02 dtd. 29.01.2018. Tender No. BRL/DNR/EOT/18/02. Sl. No. 1. Name of the work with its location : Open E-Tender for Periodical Painting of bridge girder of bridge no 7 DB of 121 M clear span, shore span 01 to 04 (clear span 30.5M) & 01 to 06 viaduct (clear span 18.3M) under DY. CE/BRL/HJP of Danapur division. **2. Approx. cost of work (₹)** : 1,51,16,194.62. **3. Earnest Money to be deposited (₹)** : 2,25,590.00. **4. Tender Document Cost (₹)** : 5,000.00. **5. Date & Time for submission of tender and opening of Tender** : The tender have to be submitted online on www.irops.gov.in up to 12.00 hrs. on the date of opening i.e. 12-3-2018 and will be opened on the same day after 12.00 hrs.

6. Website particulars where complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender from can be purchased etc. : 1. Detailed tender notice, eligibility criteria & tender documents can be seen from the CRIS website: <http://www.irops.gov.in> & full details of notice can be seen on notice board. All corrigendum will be uploaded on website if required.

Dy. Chief Engineer (BRL), E.C. Railway, Hajipur
PR/1643/HQ/ENGG/T/17-18/52

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

Tender Notice for Construction works

(1) E-Tender No.-DRM-ENGG-BSP-T-172-2017-18, Date: 29.01.2018
Work: Improvement of drainage of existing LHS by providing effective drainage system at L.C. No. 286, 294, 295 CG-1 & CG-7 under the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN/(East)/ Bilaspur. **Tender Value (In ₹) :** 1,33,48,126/-, **EMD (In ₹) :** 2,16,750/-

(2) E-Tender No.-DRM-ENGG-BSP-T-173-2017-18, Date: 29.01.2018
Work: Casting & insertion of RCC box by pushing technique & provision of RCC box by cast-in-situ for crossing of 2 nos. 900 mm diameter underground make up water pipe lines of NTPC at KM 524/04 and 524/10 in between IB-Brajrajnagar station under the jurisdiction of ADEEN/Raigarh. **Tender Value (In ₹) :** 5,43,61,996/-, **EMD (In ₹) :** 4,21,810/-

(3) E-Tender No.-DRM-ENGG-BSP-T-174-2017-18, Date: 29.01.2018
Work: Extension of platform length for 24 coach trains at Karkeli, Lohra, Rupound & Jhalawar, VBM work on half of the platform at Chandia Road Goods shed and construction of one unit type-III quarter at Rupound for sectional JE/SSE/P.Way under the jurisdiction of ADEEN/Umaria. **Tender Value (In ₹) :** 2,24,09,218.07/-, **EMD (In ₹) :** 2,62,050/-

Last date of Submission of Tender: Upto 16.00 hrs. on 07.03.2018.

The complete information of above E-tender Notices is available over websites <http://www.irops.gov.in>. Bids other than e-bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders.

Divl. Railway Manager (Engg./BSP)
Clean India Drive

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

The Divisional Railway Manager (Engg)/ E.C. Railway/Samastipur for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open Tender from experienced and financially capable tenderers including those registered with Government Department like Irrigation/CPWD/MES or any Public Sector Undertaking for the following works in E-Tendering mode of IREPS web portal of Indian Railways:-

Sl. No. 1- Tender Notice No. TC-16-SPJ
Name of work : Supply of welding Portion (60KG/90UTS) and other accessories for welding of rail joint by SKV process with Single Shot Crucible method in connection with CTR (P) and other works from MFP-SGL. **Tender Value. (In ₹) :** 1,28,58,004.7 **Earnest Money. (In ₹) :** 2,14,300/- **Cost of Tender document. (In ₹) :** 5000/- **Completion period of the work:** 06 months **Sl. No. 2- Tender Notice No. TC-17-SPJ**
Name of work : Supply of welding portion (52KG/90UTS) and other accessories for welding of rail joint by SKV process with Single Shot Crucible Method in connection with various P. way works in the jurisdiction of SR. DEN/II **Tender Value. (In ₹) :** 1,88,37,568.64 **Earnest Money. (In ₹) :** 2,44,190/- **Cost of Tender document. (In ₹) :** 5000/- **Completion period of the work:** 12 months **Sl. No. 3- Tender Notice No. TC-18-SPJ**
Name of work : Sagauli-Paniyahwa and Sagauli - TTR (CS+CMSC)-55 Sets. **Tender Value. (In ₹) :** 1,00,32,284.7 **Earnest Money. (In ₹) :** 2,00,170/- **Cost of Tender document. (In ₹) :** 5000/- **Completion period of the work:** 14 months

1. Receiving Date & time for E-Tender mode on IREPS web portal : 13-03-2018 up to 15.00 hours. **2. Opening Date & time for E-Tender** : On same date after 15.00 hours. **3. Website particulars where complete details of tender & tender document can be seen on Website:** www.irops.gov.in

Sr. Civil Engineer/Coord. E.C. Railway Samastipur
PR/1636/SPJ/ENGG/T/17-18/68

NLC India Limited

(formerly Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited)
Navratna - Government of India Enterprise

Regd. Office : First Floor, No.8, Major Saltwaterpuri Road, FSD, Egmore Complex of Food Corporation of India, Chennai - 600 031.
Corp. Office : Block-1, Neyveli-607 801, Cuddalore District, Tamil Nadu.
CIN No.: L39309TN1956G0003597, Website: www.nlcindia.com

SALE OF RAW LIGNITE THROUGH e-AUCTION

The following e-Auctions for the sale of Raw Lignite will be conducted by M/s. MSTC Limited, Chennai on "as-is-where-is and no complaint basis only" as detailed below:

Product	e-Auction No.	Date	Buyer / User	Qty / Tonnes	Location / Unit
Raw Lignite	EARL-32	14.02.2018	Any Big Buyer / User or their authorized agents	5,00,000	Mine-IA
	EARL-34	28.02.2018			
	EARL-33	14.02.2018	Any Small Buyer / User or their authorized agents	50,000	
	EARL-35	28.02.2018			

For further details contact: The General Manager, Sales & Marketing, Administrative Office / Mine-I & IA, Block-26, Neyveli-607 803. Telephone & Fax: 04142-228349.

e-Mail: sales.marketing@nlcindia.com To participate in the e-Auctions please register online at www.mstccommerce.com

FOR FURTHER DETAILS/CORRIGENDUM VISIT: www.nlcindia.com

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CENTRAL ORGANISATION FOR RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION

E-Tender Notice No. ELCORE-T-PMC-Gr.-212 & 213- Mod **TENDER NOTICE** **Date: 30.01.2018**
On behalf of the President of India, Chief Administrative Officer (RE) Central Organization Railway Electrification, Nawab Yusuf Road, Civil lines Allahabad- 211001 invites following E-Tender:-

On behalf of the President of India, Chief Administrative Officer (RE) Central Organization Railway Electrification, Newao Yusad Road, Civil lines Allahabad- 211001 invites following E-Tender:-			
Name of Work	Project Management Consultancy services for Design, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 25 KV, 50 Hz, Single Phase electrification works (OHE, TSS, SCADA & Electric General, S&T and Civil Engineering works) in Ahmedabad (Excl.) - Rajkot section (Gr.-212) & Mehsana (Excl.)-Viramgam - Samkhialiyali section (Gr.- 213) of Ahmedabad & Rajkot Division of Western Rly. under RE Project, Ahmedabad Total 525 RKM/1066.31 TKM.		
Tender Type	Open	Bidding System	
Tender Closing Date & Time	07.03.2018 15:00 Hrs.	Advertised Value (₹)	108905142.76
Pre-Bid Required	Yes	Pre-Bid Query/Conference Date & Time	16.02.2018 11:30 Hrs.
Earnest Money (₹)	694530.00	Tender Doc. Cost (₹)	10000.00
Validity of Offer (Days)	90	Period of Completion	36 Months
Note:- * Unnecessary information of above E- Tender and Tender documents available on IRFEB website:-			

Note: 1- The complete information of above E- Tender and Tender document are available on IREPS website i.e. www.irops.gov.in. **2. Only E-Bids shall be accepted against above Tender.** The e-bids may be submitted before 15.00 hrs on tender closing date. **Chief Administrative Officer (RE), Central Organization Railway Electrification, Allahabad FOR & ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT OF INDIA**

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Without feelings of respect, what is there to distinguish men from beasts?

There are dark shadows on the earth, but its lights are stronger in the contrast

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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DECCAN Chronicle

2 FEBRUARY 2018

Finally, rural India gets some attention

The pathbreaking Budget that finance minister Arun Jaitley presented on Thursday stands out for its heavy tilt towards the revival and development of rural India's economy. Earlier, agriculture usually got a passing mention as the focus was on industry. While India may no longer live in its villages, as Mahatma Gandhi once said, it's a fact that 60 per cent of the population still lives in villages and small towns. Bharat, as rural India is often called, has long been neglected and deprived of facilities like healthcare and education in favour of urban India, which became a magnet for young village youth seeking employment. Whether the change of heart was brought about by the large number of farmers' suicides or it's a considered policy to make amends for the devastation caused to cash-reliant rural India by the hare-brained demonetisation move, the tilt was long overdue. There are several advantages to developing roads and rural electrification as these would not only provide jobs but also increase rural productivity and boost the overall economy. More purchasing power in rural areas will boost consumption of healthcare, consumer and white goods produced in urban India. It's a fact that in areas where there's no electrification life comes to a standstill after sunset. There are 40 million households that still don't have electricity. This will hopefully be remedied if the rural electrification and sanitation programmes are implemented sincerely, specially in the last mile — that is, actually reaching people's homes.

But Mr Jaitley's real game-changer was the National Health Protection Scheme, covering 10 crore poor families or 50 crore people. This could help bring a sheen to India's global image, where it ranks 154 out of 195 countries on healthcare access, according to the UK's prestigious *Lancet*. India, which prides itself in being the fastest growing economy, lags behind Nepal, Bangladesh, Ghana and Liberia on this front. The NHPS, or "Modicare", as some analysts called it, will be the largest such scheme worldwide, covering five lakh families annually for hospitalisation care. This is good news for hospitals and it must be ensured hospitals don't hike their charges.

There are a few negatives in the Budget — like the status quo on individual income-tax, where some concessions were expected. Perhaps the finance minister has a good reason for this, and may reveal it soon. Interestingly, the Budget will boost private investment as customs duty has been imposed on items like mobile chargers and TVs. Manufacturing, which is a low 24.2 per cent of GDP compared to the world average of 30.5 per cent, may get a much-needed push due to the reduction in corporate tax. This is a silver lining for private investment, languishing due to lack of incentives.

Finally, it's a Budget with a heart, with something for everyone: from infrastructure to the small and medium industries to salaried people, women, retirees and senior citizens.

Speak up on Afghanistan

At a lunch for UN Security Council members, US President Donald Trump said that after the recent "atrocities" in Afghanistan — a reference to a spate of ghastly attacks in Kabul last week — his government wouldn't hold talks with the Taliban. He added, though, that if talks were held, it would "be a long way off".

The anger is palpable, and understandable. But this can't be deemed as the final US stance. Only a month earlier, a *New York Times* report said, America's UN ambassador Nikki Haley had said all parties were preparing for a conversation.

This was before the US suspended a tranche of crucial defence-related payments to Pakistan, which angered Islamabad. The succession of attacks on Kabul was a follow up. The real point, really, is Pakistan. The Taliban are only an instrumentality.

The US should say if it's prepared to take any further steps to chastise Islamabad, besides stopping defence funds. That would give Afghans hope of meaningful steps being taken.

Besides commiserating with victims of terrorist strikes in Kabul, India has said nothing of a political nature about Afghanistan lately. The least it can say is that US forces should end the futile attempt to bomb Afghan villages in search of terrorists, but focus instead on the sanctuaries inside Pakistan. Remember, India and Afghanistan are strategic allies. Every day they fight the same forces in tackling extremism and terrorism. India should voice its own thoughts, not repeat Washington's, although the two are friendly.

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Chandrajit
Banerjee



Budget strikes the right note, it's realistic & well-balanced

Finance minister Arun Jaitley has presented a realistic and pragmatic Budget aimed at striking the right chord with all segments of society and successfully delivering on the nation's expectations. A well-balanced Budget, the first after the implementation of GST, it provides a compelling template for lifting growth and investment even while providing a fillip to employment generation and removing rural stress. The two-pronged approach adopted by the government — to provide a boost to the economy while taking measures to enhance welfare expenditure for the poor — speaks volumes about the sagacity and vision articulated in the Budget.

Under the circumstances, the Budget has adopted just the right approach for catalysing growth with social inclusion. A well-rounded Budget, it seeks to strengthen the major growth drivers which would rev up economic activity in the medium term. It takes forward the landmark reform measures like GST, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code and bank recapitalisation taken by the government through the last three years.

At the same time, the FM has announced a slew of measures for better management of the food

economy, developing human capital through better educational opportunities and skill development, game-changing measures to improve health outcomes, social security, intensifying infrastructure investment, continuing reforms in the financial sector, incentives for startups and MSMEs, encouraging Make in India, digitisation and e-governance initiatives to improve the ease of doing business, among others. In doing so, the FM has deftly managed the daunting task of reviving the growth and investment cycle while addressing the expectations caused by social and demographic changes.

The Budget offers a bold agricultural and rural thrust to give a stimulus to equity and economic growth. There is a jump in expenditure on agriculture, which is critical for improving farm productivity, creating farm and non-farm employment and augmenting farmer income.

Accordingly, the FM provides for raising the minimum support price for all unannounced kharif crops, strengthening irrigation and agri-infrastructure, enhancing credit support to farmers, facilitating agriculture marketing through the e-nam network, liberalising agro-exports, focused incentives in areas such as horticulture, organic

farming, fisheries, bamboo, among others.

The FM rightly recognised that substantial investment in human capital through education and skill development is vital for sustainable economic progress and for building a prosperous future. The education sector sees a new initiative of "Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education", that would hike research investments and infrastructure in higher education institutions with a significant outlay of ₹1,00,000 crores over the next four years. This is in line with CII's recommendation to encourage research in academia.

A most striking feature of the Budget is the provision on healthcare and social protection. The launch of the National Health Protection Scheme, which is anticipated to cover 50 crore beneficiaries, is a game-changer in that it would be the world's largest government-funded healthcare programme which would provide security to low-income households. The provisions on healthcare such as reducing the cost of healthcare including seeking private sector involvement in health and wellness centres through CSR reflects the Narendra Modi government's commitment towards according a

vanguard position in our development agenda.

Acknowledging the immense contribution made by the MSME sector towards growth and job creation, the Union Budget 2018-19 has announced a major tax reduction for these enterprises by lowering the corporate tax rate for enterprises with an annual turnover of upto ₹250 crores to 25 per cent. The lowering of the rate would provide more cash to units to grow faster and create more jobs.

Additionally, addressing the financing needs of this sector, special treatment to venture capital funds, addressing NPAs, promoting startups, etc, are noteworthy. Expanding of the Mudra Yojana, online loan sanctioning and use of fintech are positive steps for the sector. CII welcomes these initiatives by the government to MSMEs which are the drivers of growth, employment generation and equitable development across the country.

Mr Jaitley's Budget has also accepted the demand of industry and raised customs duty on select items to provide a fillip to "Make in India". CII also welcomes the extension of fixed term employment to all industries. The move towards a flexible employment policy that protects the interests of

both the employer and the employee would go a long way to boost investment and promote jobs.

Continuing with the focus on job creation, the Budget has made the right moves by further announcing measures such as extending government contribution to EPF of 12 per cent of wages for all new employees for the next three years and reducing the contribution for women to eight per cent. The relaxation in the conditions for claiming tax deduction on additional employment will help to boost new job creation in the formal sector, which was the need of the hour.

The reintroduction of standard deduction for the salaried class is a welcome measure and it would provide a much-needed relief to individual taxpayers, raise their disposable incomes and boost consumption demand in the economy.

The Budget sends a strong message towards the continuity of fiscal prudence despite the economy being buffeted by domestic and global challenges. Overall, the Budget reflects a pragmatic approach and displays a vision to drive the economy back to the path of inclusive growth.

The writer is the director-general of the Confederation of Indian Industry



A tame exercise: Has govt run out of steam?



Parsa
Venkateshwar
Rao Jr

The thrust of finance minister Arun Jaitley's fifth Budget was on agriculture and the rural economy. It is tempting to see this as a populist gesture for a government that will go into an election next year. The truth is that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, which had indulged in policy fireworks in the first two years, seems to have run out of steam. The Make in India, Start-Up India, Digital India and Skill India programmes seem to have fallen by the wayside. This is reflected in the subdued suggestion in the Budget speech about formulating an indigenous defence production policy, and this at the end of four years in office and for a party that prides itself on a hawkish stance in matters of security. There is silence on modernising the armed forces and procuring arms to meet the new challenges. There was no reference to manufacturing in the Budget speech, and a passing reference to the services sector being the mainstay of economic growth.

The focus was on agriculture, on on-farm, off-farm jobs, on assured prices for farmers by pegging the minimum support price (MSP) at one-and-a-half times the production cost and providing ₹2,000 crores for a rural market fund, ₹500 crores for Operation Green to protect onions, potatoes and tomatoes by creating warehousing facilities, and nearly doubling the allocation for food processing sec-

toms duties on iPhone parts and television parts is a weak gesture to protect and encourage domestic manufacturers, and give fillip to Make in India.

The Budget contains no overall strategy of growth. The belief is that the structural reforms and the push to infrastructure in the past three years should sustain the seven per cent growth momentum, and take it safely into the modest eight per cent growth trajectory. There is absence of ambition in pushing growth rates into double digits. It is of course realistic to be modest and avoid setting up unreachable targets. There is also some realisation in the government that India cannot plough its own furrow of growth, and that it can only grow when the global economy revives.

The incentives announced in the social sector like medical insurance of ₹5 lakhs per annum to each of 10 crore poor families is the standard welfare measure which is the attitude of a nanny state, which wants to give out of the state's bounty because the number of tax payers has increased thanks to demonetisation and the implementation of Goods and Services Tax (GST), and tax revenues have grown too. Finance minister Arun Jaitley's sole satisfaction lies in the increased tax revenue bounty of the government. He said that the people celebrated demonetisation as "imaandaari ka utsav"

In 2014 PM Modi exuded confidence about transforming the country and its economy. The irrational exuberance of the government on its ability to change and guide the economy has died down...

LETTERS

SICKENING SITUATION

Indian judiciary stands tarred again with the recommendation made by the Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra for the removal of Allahabad Justice Narayan Shukla. It is a tragedy that finally the supreme institution which is the ultimate abode from where the common man expects justice also has turned a place for dishonest occupants. What is more amusing is that Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra who has recommended removal of Justice Shukla is also under a cloud and the opposition parties are discussing about bringing impeachment proceedings against him in Parliament.

Tharcus S. Fernando,
Chennai

SWIFT ACTION

The swift action initiated by the Supreme Court and the Central government to give expert treatment by AIIMS specialists to the eight-month-old rape victim in New Delhi is praiseworthy SC shocked by infant's rape. The deep concern, urgency and importance given to the safety of the child and the court's decision to hear the case in the afternoon itself are commendable. Stringent punishment, including clinical castration, must be given to the perpetrator of the brutal act committed on the infant.

K.S. Thampi,
Chennai

BOYS IN BLUE

Many congratulations to Boys-in-Blue for decimating Pakistan in the semi-final of the Under-19 cricket world cup, and sailing into the finals in an emphatic fashion. Much against expectations, India blew Pakistan away, as our young lads outplayed the opponents in all departments of the game, with Shubman Gill scoring an unbeaten century and medium pacer Ishan Porel slicing through the top orders with a four-wicket burst and in the process they made it a lop-sided contest. True to the motto of the Under-19 world cup, no Pakistani batsmen crossed 18 runs! The Indian team is now just a step away from winning the world cup for a record fourth time. Coach Rahul Dravid deserves compliments for he has done a wonderful job in shaping these lads as a potential winning unit, and no wonder a few of them have already made their way into the IPL this year.

R. Sivakumar,
Chennai

Budget 2018-19: More sleight of hand



Mohan Guruswamy

The Union Budget 2018-19 was presented at a time when the Indian economy is facing the worst slowdown in at least half a decade (according to the Central Statistical Office). While macroeconomic shocks like demonetisation and the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) are likely to have contributed to the slowdown, the root of the slowdown lies in the decline of investments in the country.

The slowdown in investments has led to all-round and widespread gloom and distress. The big question about this Budget then was to see how it addresses issues arising out of this — such a job con-

traction in the informal sector, the slowdown of manufacturing, increasing farmer and lower middle class distress?

In a Budget, you take from some and give to others. So who gives and who takes is where we should be looking. The challenge of Budget-making is to take enough from the nearly 15 per cent of the population, or about 200 million people making up 40 million families liable for direct taxes, without dissatisfying them too much.

This should provide enough to blunt the edge of popular anger of the 60 per cent who make little more than subsistence in terms of income. This covers about 700-750 million of the population, or 150 million families. It is these people have largely been bypassed by the huge growth gains made since

1998. That means the two NDA and two UPA terms.

Added to this, the government has to promise delivering all this with a most expensive public administration (10.4 per cent of GDP), and an almost defunct delivery system. A majority of government employees — over 25 million — are the bedrock of the direct taxes-paying cohort. So, in effect, a major part of the direct taxes are realised by the government from those who work in it. In either case, we the people pay for them.

So you need to get much from others. This is where indirect taxes come in. Indirect taxes are derived from a far bigger base of the population. For instance, even the lowest sections will buy matchboxes, from which taxes are derived. As you go up the chain of manufactured goods, the incidence of indirect taxes increases. This is where you run up against powerful lobbies. For instance, polyester yarn manufacturers will look at askance at too many reliefs and benefits given to the cotton textiles sector. Balancing the Budget is the easier part. Balancing aspirations is next

Similar sleight of hand is indulged in increasing the standard deduction to ₹40,000 for salaried persons. The outlay for this is ₹8,000 crores. But the education cess goes up by one per cent, which means an outgo of ₹11,000 crores.

to impossible.

Thus, Budgets haven't really changed over the decades. An analysis of Budget breakups since 1999 shows that proportions of most heads just do not change, as GDP growth and hence tax revenues usually stay nearer where they have been before. Discretionary revenue expenditure can only go up when GDP growth really perks up, as we saw in 2009-2012. From then it has been downhill in terms of growth.

Against this backdrop, how are Narendra Modi and Arun Jaitley faring? I must say quite heroically. Like boys on the burning deck. They are just distracting us with promises and hoping to stave off the

inevitable — popular discontent. Take for instance the much-hyped National Health Protection Scheme to cover 500 million people, or 100 million families, with medical cover of up to ₹5 lakhs. But what is the outlay for this? It is a measly ₹30,000 crores, translating into a premium of about ₹3,000 per beneficiary family, whereas the prevailing premiums are at about ₹4,400 a year. Even here, the government is being disingenuous. If this were in addition to what is allocated to the ₹1.38 lakh crores for health, which was ₹1.22 lakh crores in the previous year, there would be some little cause to cheer. No, instead it comes from the health budget, which in effect means that this year less money is being spent on public healthcare.

So if government hospitals and clinics have fewer doctors and lesser medicines, be happy with your health insurance and go to a private nursing home or corporate hospital and see how soon the cover evaporates. In effect this is a direct benefit to private healthcare providers, and insurance companies who will get a ₹30,000-crore windfall.

Similar sleight of hand is indulged in increasing the standard deduction to ₹40,000 for salaried persons. The outlay for this is ₹8,000 crores. But the education cess goes up by one per cent, which means an outgo of ₹11,000 crores. So who is out of pocket by ₹3,000 crores?

The government has announced that it will fund eight crore new stoves and cylinders on getting a gas connection. This is an existing scheme. But reports from gas agency dealers in several parts of the nation, specially those in rural areas, have reported that an extremely low number of Ujjawala beneficiaries are returning for refills of their cylinders.

Thus, the number of LPG connections may be rising rapidly, but LPG usage is not. The catch is that below poverty line families who exist on less than ₹32 a day in rural areas and ₹47 a day in urban areas are simply too poor to afford the market rate of LPG.

There was much expectation of an agriculture-oriented Budget. Nothing has been announced that would suggest that. Institutional credit to the

agriculture sector has gone up to ₹11 lakh crores when it was ₹10 lakh crores last year.

The finance minister spoke about "revitalising infrastructure and systems in education by 2022... Technology to be the biggest driver in improving the quality of education. To increase digital intensity in education, it will move infrastructure from blackboard to digital board. By 2022, every block with more than 50 per cent ST population will have Eklavya schools at par with Navodaya Vidyalayas". Fine, but show me the money? He is clearly a man for the big picture, who doesn't get into such specifics.

Am I unhappy about the Budget? Why should I be? The limit for senior citizens for investment in interest-bearing LIC schemes has doubled to from ₹7.5 lakhs ₹15 lakhs. But as Claude Pepper said: "At my age I don't even buy green bananas!"

The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. He also specialises in the Chinese economy.

FM walks the talk, honestly and judiciously, but very diffidently..



Sanjeev Ahluwalia

The Union Budget 2018-19 appears an honest and judicious construct when conveyed orally. The biggest relief is that there has been no substantive deviation from the path of fiscal discipline. The fiscal deficit for 2017-18 is pegged at 3.5 per cent of GDP. This is 0.30 per cent higher than the budgeted estimate for this year.

But it is well within the 0.50 leeway recommended by the N.K. Singh Committee report on Fiscal Responsibility and Budgetary Management. With the disruptions caused by GST still lingering and the need to recapitalise banks and push public investment in an environment where the private sector is still sitting on its funds, the stage seems set for losing the leeway in the interest of growth and jobs.

More reassurance comes from the fiscal deficit target for 2018-19 set at 3.3 per cent of GDP. This re-establishes the declining trend for fiscal deficit towards the magic number of three per cent of GDP, which has eluded us so far.

On the expenditure side, agriculture and rural development takes centre stage. This is more than welcome against the backdrop of agrarian distress and farmer suicides. Ajay Jharkar of the Bharat Krishak Samaj points out that an Indian farmer commits suicide every 40 minutes.

No wonder then that Mr Jaitley outlined, in great detail, many of the specific measures proposed to reverse this trend.

One popular, but possibly ineffective step is an assurance that all the crops notified for the kharif cycle will be covered under the minimum support price

(MSP) scheme.

Basically, this means that if market prices fall below the cost of production plus 50 per cent as margin for the farmer, the government will stand committed to make good the difference (as is being done in Madhya Pradesh now) or to physically procure the produce.

But representatives of farmers' interests are not satisfied. They assert that the manner in which costs are to be determined should be spelt out in a participative manner first to ensure that a meaningful MSP is assured. The downside of an MSP type of production incentive is that it kills innovation and crop diversification away from those covered under MSP. This way of assuring farmer incomes also privileges the traditional "Green Revolution" areas in the North, which unfortunately are not well endowed with the natural resources — water, for example — to sustain intensive modern farming, at the expense of Eastern India, which has all of nature's bounties except that it is very far from the national capital-oriented policy structure.

Other big-ticket items in agriculture are a more than doubling of the outlay for agro-processing industries to ₹14 billion and assurances that the export of agri products would be liberalised to boost their exports threefold to their potential of around \$100 billion.

For the Northeast, a Bamboo Mission was announced with an outlay of ₹13 billion. Two new infrastructure funds are to set up — one for fisheries and aquaculture infrastructure and another for animal husbandry infrastructure — at a total outlay of ₹100 billion. Crop credit would increase by 10 per cent to ₹11 trillion and lessee farm-

ers would be facilitated to access crop credit from banks — something which they cannot do today and have, instead, to rely on private moneylenders.

The budgetary outlay for rural roads, affordable houses, toilets and electricity extension of ₹2.4 trillion will leverage five time more funds from other sources and generate work for 10 million people, as per the Budget documents.

Big changes were also announced in healthcare. A new flagship scheme will provide in-hospital medical insurance to 100 million poor families with an insurance cover of ₹5 lakhs. Compare this with the measly cover now available of ₹30,000 only under the Rashtriya Swastha Bima Yojana. The outlay on health, education and social protection increases by around 13 per cent over the 2017-18 spend to ₹1.4 trillion.

To boost employment in manufacturing, the government proposes to extend the existing scheme under which it meets the cost of a contribution of 12 per cent per year towards the Employees' Provident Fund contribution in the medium, small and micro enterprises to all the manufacturing sectors.

The idea is to increase the attractiveness of employing young job seekers by reducing their cost to the employer for three years, by which time it is expected the skills they acquire will make their value addition viable on its own.

The highlights for new projects in infrastructure are that 99 smart cities have been selected with an outlay of ₹2.4 trillion, against which projects worth around 10 per cent of the outlay are ongoing and projects worth one per cent of the outlay have been

completed. The government expects to complete 9,000 km of highways in this year. Bharat Net, the fiber connectivity programme, is also proceeding apace. The Railways will spend ₹1.48 trillion on capital investments, mostly in new works in 2018-19. Six hundred railway stations are to be upgraded.

The total expenditure next year is around 10 per cent higher than the estimate for 2017-18 of ₹22.2 trillion. The nominal GDP in 2018-19 is estimated to be 11.5 per cent higher than in the current year. On the revenue side, the big increase is an estimated increase of 12 per cent in GST revenues next year by around ₹2.6 trillion to a level of ₹4.4 trillion, and ₹20,000 crores from the new capital gains tax of 10 per cent on equity sold after holding it for one year. This makes sticking to the 3.3 fiscal deficit target a bit dodgy in 2018-19.

But who knows, maybe the finance minister has some artillery hidden up his sleeve. Disinvestment has been assessed conservatively in 2018-19 at ₹80,000 crores, against the achievement this year of ₹1 trillion. The bank recapitalisation support of ₹80,000 crores is expected to leverage new lending capacity of ₹5 trillion. But one cannot but get the feeling that some of the expenditure estimates are a bit conservative relative to the ambition embedded in the programmes.

The good news is ending 2018-19 with a fiscal deficit equal to this year's at 3.5 per cent is no big deal. But for the Narendra Modi government, which takes targets seriously, it could be a bit of a come down.

The writer is adviser, Observer Research Foundation



Dominic Emmanuel

Worship the lights

Forty is said to be a Biblical number as many events in the Bible last for 40 days or happen after 40 days. Jesus fasted for 40 days in the desert or the flood on earth caused by incessant rains in the time of Noah for 40 days and nights.

The number has close connection with the Judaism that follows the Mosaic laws. Jesus Christ being a Jew and founder of Christianity, the Church continues to observe some of those customs.

Thus today February 2, is actually the 40th day after the birth of Jesus — Christmas and according to then existing Jewish custom He is brought for the first time to the Synagogue by his parents, to fulfill the rituals for the first born of the family. The Bible tells us that Mary and Joseph, belonging to the poorer section of society, "present" child Jesus in the temple with "an offering of a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons". That is why February 2, among Christians is known as the "Feast of the Presentation of the Lord".

Hence in the church where I serve now in Austria, the Christmas decorations will be removed only now, though in some other churches they have been removed after January 6, the Feast of the three wise men of East who visited Child Jesus bringing him gifts of Gold, Myrrh and Incense.

Along with this, an additional reason for the importance of February 2 is related to the then Jewish custom was that Mary, the mother

of Jesus too could leave her home and visit the Synagogue only after 40 days after giving birth to Jesus.

One of the important features of the liturgical celebration of today's feast in churches is a candle light procession.

Among the different names and descriptions given to Jesus, He is also considered as the "Light of the World".

The candle light procession thus signifies that Jesus as Saviour of the World came to overcome the darkness of sin by being the Light to a sinful world.

Light has significance also in other religions. Diwali being one of the most solemn festivals in India signifies again the victory of good over evil. While the little earthen oil lamps — "diyas" lighten up the whole surroundings, similar lit earthen lamps are also used in homes and temples during worship across the country.

As God's creatures each of us too carries within us His light. Let us then become aware that we too carry a responsibility using the light emanating from the lamps of our life to drive away the darkness of sin from our own life.

In doing so we play an important role to get rid of the evil of sin and darkness around us resulting in making ourselves and others worthy of being "presentable" in the House of God.

The writer, a founder-member of the Parliament of Religions, can be contacted at frdominic@gmail.com



THE NYT CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Falafel holders
- 6 Piano technician
- 11 Start of a countdown
- 14 Food-spoiling bacterium
- 15 "Remember the ___!"
- 16 Party card game
- 17 "Tell me the rumors are false!"
- 19 Kook
- 20 Revolutionary Guevara
- 21 Some HDTVs
- 22 Glowing part of a fire
- 24 Comprehensive, as a report
- 27 Put an end to
- 28 2000 Kevin Spacey/Helen Hunt film
- 32 Sounding congested
- 35 Smash into
- 36 Leave rolling in the aisles
- 37 Approximation: Abbr.

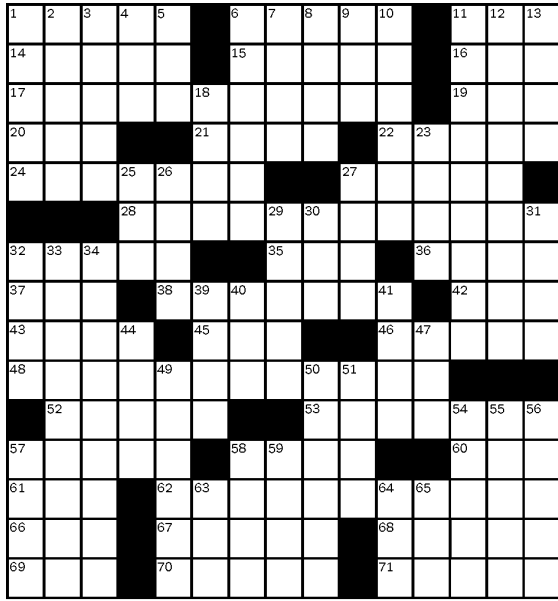
- 38 Oscar-nominated Enya song from 2001's "The Lord of the Rings"
- 42 Was out to lunch?
- 43 Apple tablet
- 45 Dog doc
- 46 Helped out
- 48 Offer effusive praise
- 52 Poe poem that starts "Once upon a midnight dreary," with "The"
- 53 Long to have
- 57 Capital of Oregon
- 58 Sweetie pie
- 60 "That ___ lie!"
- 61 Get older
- 62 Improvise
- 66 California's Big ___
- 67 Sign on a boardinghouse window
- 68 Cowboys' home
- 69 D.D.E.' predecessor
- 70 Cheese with holes
- 71 Actress Winona of "Stranger Things"

DOWN

- 1 Actor Joe of "My Cousin Vinny"
- 2 Corporate raider Carl
- 3 Trifled (with)
- 4 Three-time Frazier foe
- 5 Take a load off
- 6 Chinese martial art
- 7 Neighbor of the radius
- 8 Yanks : New York :: ___ : Washington
- 9 Letters on an ambulance
- 10 One whose work is on the house?
- 11 Popular sandwich order
- 12 Make a list of
- 13 Do, re or mi
- 18 Pretentiously showy
- 23 Clean Air Act and others
- 25 Clean Air Act org.
- 26 It may be read by a psychic
- 27 Grooming implement
- 29 Travis of country music

- 30 Liposuction target
- 31 Not naturally red-haired, e.g.
- 32 Singer Diamond or Young
- 33 Spears at the dinner table
- 34 "Keep your eyes open!"
- 39 Stratford-upon-Avon
- 40 Hankering
- 41 Per person
- 44 Drop precipitously
- 47 D.D.E., familiarly
- 49 Lures
- 50 Bad ones are hard to break
- 51 Rapper-turned-TV actor
- 54 Wicked one
- 55 ___ orange
- 56 Harder to find
- 57 Pageant wrap
- 58 Indonesian tourist destination
- 59 Naval agreements?

- 63 Like a pitch between the ankles and knees
- 64 "It's f-f-freezing!"
- 65 "Yippee!"



PUZZLE BY ALAN ARBESFELD



QUOTE UNQUOTE

It is progressive, balanced and forward looking with a well-defined focus on Digital India. Ola is already a partner to some of the initiatives. Allocation of ₹3,073 crore towards Digital India is a significant leg-up.

- BHAVISH AGGARWAL,
Co-founder & CEO, Ola

Rationalisation of LTCG as expected has arrived, though negative on sentiments but robust equity returns will absorb this 10% if corporate earnings growth happen as expected.

- KAMLESH RAO,
MD & CEO, Kotak Securities

The FM has provided a panoptic flavor to the FY19 Union Budget. The admirable 'All-in' Budget has delivered beyond expectations in a bid to reinvigorate growth that is sustainable and equitable, leveraging fully on the available fiscal space.

- RANA KAPOOR,
MD & CEO, Yes Bank

The steps taken to strengthen the presence of Fintech in the MSME space and the plans for Smart Cities shows that we are on our way to achieving our goal of being a \$1tr digital economy by 2025.

- C. P. GURNANI,
MD & CEO, TechM

MORE RELIEF FOR MSMES

■ Tax cut to benefit 99% of tax filing companies, says Jaitley

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, FEB. 1

Union finance minister Arun Jaitley on Thursday announced a slew of measures for the Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises (MSME) hit by note ban and GST, including a cut in corporate tax rate to 25 per cent for businesses with a turnover of up to ₹250 crore and setting a target of ₹3 lakh crore for lending under the MUDRA scheme in 2018-19.

MSME are a major source of employment in the country and these measures are expected to boost jobs generation.

Mr Jaitley said that the cut in corporate tax will benefit the entire class of micro, small and medium enterprises which accounts for almost 99 per cent of companies filing their tax returns.

The estimate of revenue forgone due to this measure is ₹7,000 crores during the financial year 2018-19. After this, out of about 7 lakh companies filing returns, about 7,000 companies which file returns of income and whose turnover is above ₹250 crores will remain in 30 per cent slab.

“The lower corporate income tax rate for 99 per cent of the companies will leave them with higher investible surplus which in turn will create more jobs,” he said.

Mr Jaitley proposed to set a target of ₹3 lakh crore for lending under MUDRA for FY19.

“MUDRA Yojana launched in April, 2015 has led to sanction of ₹4.6 lakh crore in credit from 10.38 crore MUDRA loans. 76 per cent of loan accounts are of women and more than 50 per cent belong to SCs, STs and OBCs,” Mr Jaitley said.

He announced the government will contribute 12 per cent of the wages of the new employees in the EPF for all the sectors for next three years. Also, the facility of fixed term employment will be extended to all sectors.

BUDGET PROJECTIONS OVER THE YEAR							
		Capital expenditure		Revenue receipts		Fiscal deficit	
		‘Good’ expenditure as it creates assets that have a multiplier effect the higher, the better		What the government earns from various taxes and levies. The higher, the better		The deficit in the government's books, which it falls by borrowing. The lower, the better	
		Below 95%	95% to 100%	Below 95%	95% to 100%	Below 95%	95% to 100%
		How good was its first projections?	What did it ultimately manage?	How good was its first projections?	What did it ultimately manage?	How good was its first projections?	What did it ultimately manage?
		RE as % of BE	actuals as % of BE	RE as % of BE	actuals as % of BE	RE as % of BE	actuals as % of BE
2009 - 10	UPA	93	91	94	93	103	104
2010 - 11	UPA	109	104	115	116	105	98
2011 - 12	UPA	98	99	97	95	126	125
2012 - 13	UPA	82	81	93	94	101	95
2013 - 14	UPA	83	82	97	96	97	93
2014 - 15	NDA	85	87	95	93	96	96
2015 - 16	NDA	98	105	106	105	96	96
2016 - 17	NDA	113	NA	103	NA	100	NA

Inflation worries shoot up on high spending promise

New Delhi, Feb. 1: The annual budget could push up inflation and prompt the central bank to raise interest rates sooner, analysts said on Thursday, raising the probability of a scenario that could hurt the nascent economic recovery.

Mr Jaitley raised the government spending for rural areas and support to farmers, while slowing the pace of fiscal consolidation.

Traders and analysts said those moves could add to inflationary pressures at a time when retail inflation was at a 17-month high.

That would make the RBI more cautious when it announces the monetary policy review on Wednesday next week, they said.

“The probability of rate hikes in the next fiscal year



has gone up materially,” said A. Prasanna, economist at ICICI Securities primary dealership in Mumbai.

A cautious stance at the RBI would increase the probability of interest rate increases in the coming fiscal year. That in turn could raise tensions between the government and the RBI,

which has resisted pressures for deep rate cuts to boost growth as it worried about increasing inflation.

Analysts said while the RBI is expected to keep interest rates on hold next week, the budget could toughen the central bank's tone. They said the government's decision to increase the minimum support price guarantee to farmers, in particular, is likely to have a direct inflationary impact.

In the budget, the government promised farmers to buy their crops at 1.5 times the cost of production, a major shift in approach after keeping the average minimum support price increase in low single digits over the past three years.

— Reuters

GROWTH LIKELY TO TOUCH 7.5% IN H2FY18

New Delhi, Feb. 1: Arun Jaitley said on Thursday that India is expected to register a growth rate of 7.2-7.5 per cent in the second half of the current fiscal and is on way to becoming the 5th largest economy of the world.

While unveiling the Budget 2018-19, he said, India has grown on an average of 7.5 per cent in the first three years of the current government and has become a \$2.5 trillion economy.

“We hope to grow at 7.2 to 7.5 per cent in the second half of the current fiscal,” Jaitley said in the Lok Sabha.

India has already become 7th largest economy of the world, he said, adding that it is expected to become 5th largest economy soon.

As per the CSO estimate Indian economy is expected to grow at 6.5 per cent in the current fiscal, ending March 31.

For 2018-19, the economy is likely to grow at 7.5 per cent as per the Economic Survey tabled in Parliament earlier this week.

GDP growth in first quarter of 2017-18 had moderated to 5.7 per cent, the lowest in the three years. In the second quarter, it recovered to 6.3 per cent.

— PTI

● **AS PER THE CSO** estimate the economy is expected to grow at 6.5% in FY18

● **GDP GROWTH** in the first quarter of financial year 2017-18 had moderated to 5.7%

HIGHLIGHTS

- **UNION FINANCE** minister Arun Jaitley admitted that the fiscal deficit will over- shoot to 3.5% per cent of the GDP in FY18 from the target of 3.2% set in last year's budget.
- **FISCAL DEFICIT** target for FY19 has been set at 3.3% as against the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act target of 3%
- **MR JAITLEY** also revised the revenue deficit target for FY18 from 1.9% to 2.6%

Sensex dips on LTCG's return

DC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, FEB. 1

The budget turned out to be a big dampener for equity market investors as it reintroduced the long-term capital gain (LTCG) tax on gains exceeding ₹1 lakh at the rate of 10 per cent without allowing the benefits of any indexation. It has also imposed a 10 per cent tax on income distributed by mutual fund equity schemes to provide a level playing field across growth oriented funds and dividend distributing funds.

However to avoid any knee-jerk reaction in the market, finance minister clarified that all gains generated upto January 31, 2018 would be grandfathered. While the proposals are sentimentally negative and could impact fresh flows in the short term till investors recalibrate their investment strategies, experts said the broader momentum in the market would continue as the expected return from the equity market is still higher as compared to other asset classes like gold and real estate.

“Over a three year investment period, this makes equity taxation worse than that on debt where LTCG tax at 10 per cent is applicable, but with inflation indexation. This in itself may not be enough to stem the flow of domestic funds into equity markets — as expected equity returns are still high,” said analysts at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

After witnessing a steep fall in the intra-day trade, the equity markets staged a smart recovery during the second half of the trading session with FPIs

Kunal Bajaj, CEO and founder of Clearfunds.com, said that the move has ensured that there is no arbitrage between dividend and growth schemes. Since investors are approaching mutual fund schemes with a long-term perspective, he believes that the tax proposal would not upset the steady flow of funds from small investors.

pumping in ₹1,099.78 crore. The Nifty ended the day at 11,016.90, down 10.80 points or 0.10 per cent while the Sensex closed the session at 35,906.66, dropping 58.36 points or 0.16 per cent.

With regards to dividends on equity funds, which were hitherto, tax free now attracting a 10 per cent dividend distribution tax, fund managers are expecting a slight churn in portfolio in favour of growth oriented schemes. “This move may impact flows into funds where investors were primarily entering with the expectation of regular dividends. Infact dividend schemes are now slightly disadvantaged as opposed to growth schemes as LTCG below ₹1 lakh is exempt from tax,” said Kaustubh Belapurkar, director — manager research, Morningstar Investment Adviser India.

COMPUTER GLITCHES HALT ROLLOUT OF E-WAY BILL

New Delhi, Feb. 1: The government on Thursday deferred implementation of requirement to carry e-permits for interstate transportation of goods following technical glitches.

GST provision requiring transporters to carry an electronic waybill or e-way bill when moving goods between states was to be implemented from today to check rampant tax evasion.

“In view of difficulties faced by the trade in generating e-way bill due to

initial technological glitches, it has been decided to extend the trial phase for generation of e-way bill, both for inter and intra state movement of goods. It will be applicable from a date to be notified,” the CBEC tweeted.

After implementation of the GST from July 1, the requirement of carrying e-way bill was postponed pending IT network readiness.

GSTN had been conducting trial runs for the system since Jan. 17. — PTI

Centre raises divestment target by 10% for FY19

FC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, FEB. 1

Even though the government for the first time in seven years completed the divestment target in FY18, it very moderately raised the target by over 10 per cent in the FY19 budget.

The Centre has exceeded the divestment target of 2017-2018 and is expected to receive about ₹1 lakh crore.

“2017-18 budget estimates for divestment were pegged at the highest ever level of ₹72,500 crore. We have already exceeded the budget estimates. I am

assuming receipts of ₹1,00,000 crore in 2017-18,” Jaitley said while presenting Union Budget, 2018.

The Centre had set a divestment target of ₹72,500 crore in the current financial year by sale of equity in state-owned companies, including strategic sale. The target included ₹46,500 crore as divestment of central public sector enterprises, ₹15,000 crore from strategic divestment and ₹11,000 crore from listing of insurance companies.

This is the first time in seven years that the gov-

ernment has completed the divestment target on the back of multiple deals like an agreement with ONGC for the strategic sale of its 51.11 percent equity shareholding in HPCL at a consideration of ₹36,915 crore.

The government has approved listing of 14 CPSEs, including two insurance companies, on the domestic bourses.

As the government's ETF Bharat-22 raised ₹14,500 crore, the finance ministry will continue to come up with more such offers including debt ETF in FY19, he said.

3 insurance cos to be merged

New Delhi, Feb. 1: As part of the Centre's divestment plans, finance minister Arun Jaitley on Thursday proposed to merge three general insurance firms into one and list that entity on bourses.

Mr Jaitley said, “Three public sector general insurance companies — National Insurance, United India Assurance and Oriental India Insurance Company — will be merged into a single insurance company and be subsequently listed.”

The merger and subsequent listing is part of the

Centre's disinvestment drive through stake sale. Experts see this proposal as a positive development, with the estimated size of the merged entity estimated to be ₹40,000 crore.

“It will be a profitable move and with an estimated size of around ₹40,000 crore, capacity of the entity will be enhanced and there won't be any need to depend upon reinsurance business to generate revenues as the three entities, based on their locations, are engaged into a host of services,” said Joydeep K Roy, PwC India.

ACCOUNTING ILLUSIONS IN BUDGET



R. BALAKRISHNAN
Founding member, Crisil

This budget is the last full budget by the BJP before the polls. It is, like all budgets, a statement of political intent. This time, the focus is to clearly do something for the farm sector and the economically weaker section of the population.

There is a renewed big bag announcement to provide health cover for up to ₹5 lakh per family, that would cover more than 10 crore families.

The second big intent is to provide better income to the farmer by providing a “minimum support price” that is related to the cost of production. Thus, the biggest segments are sought to be

addressed by these two big announcements.

As far as budgets go, it is a passable budget as it seeks to balance political and fiscal balance. The mathematics of the budget seem to be driven by an intent to be fiscally prudent.

The projected fiscal deficit is not a big number and should not bother us. Everything seems to balance (I have not read the fine print at the point of writing this). However, one thing that bothers me is the long term fiscal impact of providing universal health cover as well as farm produce price supports.

One thing that is clear is that the government is exhausting

all sources to raise revenue. Clearly too much money is needed and there is not enough revenue generation. There is no relief to the white collar salaried. There is a tax relief for the MSME, as the lower tax rate of 25% is now extended to companies with turnover of up to ₹250 crore, as against the earlier limit of ₹50 crore. Big business is disappointed. In fact the education 'cess' on income tax has been raised from three to four per cent, pushing the effective marginal rate to 34%.

The government now is a partner in the money we make from stocks. They already taxed short term gains, now their reach extends to long

term gains also. Governments are supposed to hold on to their promises. STT was introduced as an alternate to all types of capital gains. The government seems to be desperate to tax us more and more. There is some tokenism to senior citizens.

Infrastructure spend is big like in earlier budgets. Big announcements of new airports (56 of them), food processing parks, more roads, ambitious targets for houses for poor, concessions for women etc also flashed.

Clearly, trying to address every segment.

Budget making is a political exercise. Trying to please all constituents is not possible.

Revenues are far below what is spent. Unfortunately, asset sales (disinvestment, auction of natural resources etc) are like selling family silver to put a meal on the table. No one seems to mind. One day all the silver will be gone. But then, that is the problem that will be inherited by the future generation.

However, no economist or anyone seems to be bothered. Clearly this is unaccountable accounting.

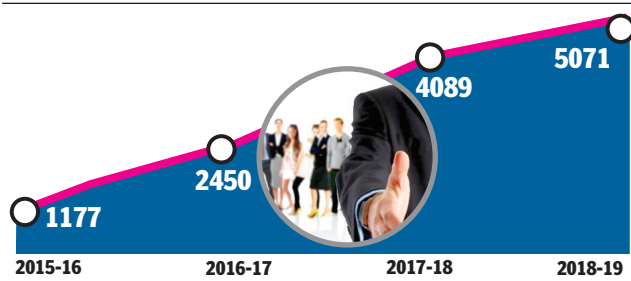
Each succeeding government tries to win votes by giving away more and more things.

And this also establishes a sense of ‘entitlement’ among the public that they have a right to get things free.



One thing that bothers me is the long term fiscal impact of providing universal health cover as well as farm produce price supports.

R. BALAKRISHNAN,
Founding member, Crisil



QUOTE UNQUOTE

The extension of corporate tax rate of 25% to companies with the turnover up to 250 crore till last year, will have a positive impact on the health of corporate India irrespective of any sector.

— R. PURAVANKARA, MD, Puravankara Limited

The FM providing more tax benefits to senior citizens experiencing rising inflationary costs is a step in the right direction. And the introduction of a LTCG Tax of 10% should be digested easily given the buoyancy.

— PREETHA REDDY, Vice-chairman, Apollo Hospitals

The corporate tax reduction is a positive move.

— NIKUNJ GHODAWAT, CFO, CleanMax Solar

HIGHLIGHTS

- INVESTORS WILL HAVE to pay 10 per cent tax on distributed income from equity-oriented mutual funds, as per the Budget proposals.
- IT IS PROPOSED to extend the benefit of exemption for withdrawal up to 40% from National Pension System Trust to all subscribers and not only to employees.

Aviation ministry allocation hiked, pegged at ₹6,602cr ■ New initiative to expand airport capacity

Govt officially announces it intends to privatise Air India

SRIDHAR KUMARASWAMI
NEW DELHI, FEB. 1

The government has officially announced that it intends to privatise national carrier Air India. The government has so far been maintaining that it is yet to decide the quantum of disinvestment of its stake in the national carrier in which it owns 100 per cent stake. The words “strategic privatisation” were used for Air India by finance minister Arun Jaitley in his Budget speech. This obviously indicates that at least a majority 51 per cent stake in Air India will be sold by the gov-

ernment to private players. The government itself mentioned a new initiative — NABH Nirman — wherein it proposes to expand India’s airport capacity “by more than five times to handle a billion trips a year”. In the wake of the government’s push for the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) or Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (Udan) — that is helping put even remote areas in the country on the aviation map — and in which fares for some of the seats on flights are subsidised by the government, Mr. Jaitley said, “Even

■ The allocation for the civil aviation ministry for 2018-19 has also been hiked steeply and pegged at ₹6,602 crore, up from just ₹2,710 crore in the revised Budget estimates for 2017-18

those who wear ‘hawaii chapals’ (slippers) are travelling by ‘hawaii jahaz’ (aircraft)”. The allocation for the civil aviation ministry for 2018-19 has also been hiked steeply and pegged at ₹6,602 crore, up from just ₹2,710 crore in the

revised Budget estimates for 2017-18. Of this amount, ₹4,469 crore has been earmarked for “purchase of two new aircraft for special extra section flight operations”, seen to be a reference for VIP flights. The finance minister also announced that “for promoting tourism and emergency medical care, the government will make necessary framework for encouraging investment in sea plane activities”.

On Air India, Mr Jaitley said, “The government has also initiated the process of strategic disinvestment in 24 CPSEs. This includes strate-

gic privatisation of Air India.” Budget documents show that the budgetary support allocated to Air India in 2018-19 as part of investment in public enterprises is ₹650 crore, down from ₹1,800 crore in the revised Budget for 2017-18. The separate capital expenditure support for the turnaround plan of Air India has also been earmarked as ₹650 crore, again down from ₹1,800 crore in the revised Budget estimate for 2017-18.

In his Budget speech, finance minister Jaitley said, “In the last three years, the domestic air passenger traffic grew at 18 per cent per

annum and our airline companies placed orders for more than 900 aircraft. Regional Connectivity Scheme of Udan, initiated by the government last year, shall connect 56 unserved airports and 31 unserved helipads across the country. Operations have already started at 16 such airports. Airport Authority of India (AAI) has 124 airports. We propose to expand our airport capacity more than five times to handle a billion trips a year under the NABH Nirman initiative. Balance sheet of AAI shall be leveraged to raise more resources for funding this expansion.”



Security personnel with a sniffer dog inspect the bundles containing the copies of Union Budget 2018-19 before being carried to Lok Sabha for the Budget Session at Parliament House in New Delhi on Thursday.

— SONDEEP SHANKAR

■ ₹80K-cr disinvestment target

3 public sector insurance firms to be merged

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, FEB. 1

The Centre has set a disinvestment target of ₹80,000 crore for 2018-19 after achieving record proceeds of ₹1 lakh crore in 2017-18. In 2017-18, Mr Jaitley had set a target of raising ₹72,500 crore. “2017-18 Budget estimates for disinvestment were pegged at the highest ever level of ₹72,500 crore. I am happy to inform the House that we have already exceeded the Budget estimates. I am assuming receipts of ₹1,00,000 crore in 2017-18,” said Mr Jaitley. He said the government has approved listing of 14 CPSEs, including two insurance companies, on the stock exchanges. Mr Jaitley said the government has also initiated the process of strategic disinvestment in 24 Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs). This includes strategic privatisation of Air India.

Mr Jaitley said that the process of acquisition of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation by the ONGC has been successfully completed. “Three public sector general insurance companies — National Insurance Company, United India Assurance Company Limited and Oriental India Insurance Company Limited — will be merged into a single insurance entity and will be subsequently listed,” Mr Jaitley said.

He said the department of investment and public asset management (DIPAM) will move forward to bring in more Exchange Traded Fund (ETF), including launching a debt fund. He said that government introduced Exchange Traded Fund Bharat-22 to raise ₹14,500 crore, which was over-subscribed in all segments.

“Given the performance on the disinvestment front this year, there were hopes that the government would be more ambitious in terms of setting the target for the next year — the ₹80,000-crore target for disinvestment receipts in FY19 is a bit conservative,” Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry president Rashesh Shah said.

■ Union finance minister Arun Jaitley said the government has approved listing of 14 CPSEs, including two insurance companies, on the stock exchanges

FOCUSED GAZE ON SOCIAL, ACADEMIC FRONT



KUMAR MANGALAM BIRLA
Chairman
Aditya Birla Group

India’s agriculture sector has received enormous attention and rightfully so. The farm sector has been extremely stressed due to the vagaries of the weather and the disconnect between cost and income. The farm sector is responsible for more than half of our people’s livelihood. So it is very comforting to note the government’s intent to double farm incomes by 2022. Farm reforms have been a crying need for decades and this Budget aims to tackle one of the biggest issues faced by farmers — the disconnect between cost and income. The Budget has announced that minimum support pricing (MSP) of crops will be linked to

production costs and fixed it at 1.5 times the costs. This is an excellent move. It will help farmers earn a return on their investments, and be less vulnerable to unpredictable weather conditions and volatile market cycles. There have been other announcements like expansion of warehouse depository system, strengthening and expansion of e-NAM and development of Gramin Agricultural Markets that will be exempted from regulations of APMCs. All these will resonate with India’s agricultural markets, and hopefully boost rural consumption. Yet another initiative is the introduction of health insur-

■ India’s agriculture sector has received enormous attention and rightfully so

ance coverage for all. The announcement of ₹5 lakh medical cover for 10 crore households is a huge positive step. It will bring over 50 million individuals under insurance coverage and provide them with a much-needed financial net. We are moving towards universal health coverage. There have been other big ticket social messages. Free gas connections for about eight crore households, which will have the twin benefit of reducing air pollu-

tion and improving living conditions. To improve the quality of education, the quality and training of teachers, needs to be upped manifold. So Union finance minister Arun Jaitley has announced an integrated B.Ed. programme. The use of technology to upgrade skills of teachers (through the recently launched digital portal “Diksha” is vital. Likewise, to increase the digital intensity in the education system in rural areas by gradually moving from “black board” to “digital board” is much needed. By emphasising health security and education, the Finance

Minister reiterated the view that this goes to build India’s human capital. India’s great growth promise is its young demography. The reduction in the corporate tax rate to 25 per cent for companies with a turnover under ₹250 crore will give the much required impetus to the MSME sector. This will also spawn jobs — an urgent need for bolstering the economy. Finally, even as the fiscal deficit for FY18 at 3.5 per cent has exceeded the Budget target, the positive aspect is that the government is sticking to the path of fiscal consolidation with a budgeted fiscal deficit target of 3.3 per cent for FY19.



This is a prudent Budget that is directionally on track, with a focused gaze on the social, academic and economic front, in the spirit of inclusive growth. It endeavours to strike a balance between fiscal priorities and growth.



₹12,169cr

IS THE TOTAL AMOUNT PROPOSED TO BE SPENT TOWARDS THE URBAN REJUVENATION MISSION

Fiscal deficit will overshoot to 3.5%: FM

3.2 per cent target set last year ■ Jaitley has failed 1st time to achieve target set in Budget

PAWAN BALI
NEW DELHI, FEB. 1

Union finance minister Arun Jaitley on Thursday admitted that fiscal deficit would overshoot to 3.5 per cent of the GDP in 2017-18. A target of 3.2 per cent was set in the last year’s Budget.

This is the first time that Mr Jaitley has failed to achieve a fiscal deficit target set in the Union Budget.

The fiscal deficit target for 2018-19 has been set at 3.3 per cent for 2018-19 as against the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act target of 3 per cent. The deficit was at 3.5 per cent in 2016-17. The difference between total revenue and total expenditure of the government is termed fiscal deficit.

The finance minister said

that in 2017-18, the Central government will be receiving GST revenues only for 11 months, instead of 12 months. This, he said will have fiscal effect. “There has also been some shortfall in non-tax revenues on account of certain developments, including deferment of spectrum auction. A part of this shortfall has been made up through higher direct tax revenues and bigger disinvestment receipts,” said the finance minister.

However, Mr Jaitley defended his track record saying that when the NDA government assumed office in May 2014, the fiscal deficit was running at very high levels. “The fiscal deficit for 2013-14 was 4.4 per cent of GDP. The Prime Minister and the government have always

■ Mr Jaitley said the government has also accepted the recommendation to use fiscal deficit target as the key operational parameter. Necessary amendment proposals are included in the Finance Bill, he said.

attached utmost priority to prudent fiscal management and controlling fiscal deficit,” he said.

Mr Jaitley pointed out that the NDA government embarked on the path of consistent fiscal reduction and consolidation in 2014.

“Fiscal deficit was brought down to 4.1 per cent in 2014-15 to 3.9 per cent in 2015-16, and

to 3.5 per cent in 2016-17,” said the finance minister. He said that in order to impart ‘unquestionable credibility’ to the government’s commitment to the revised fiscal glide path, “I am proposing to accept key recommendations of the Fiscal Reform and Budget Management Committee relating to adoption of the debt rule and to bring down Central government’s debt to GDP ratio to 40 per cent.”

Mr Jaitley said the government has also accepted the recommendation to use fiscal deficit target as the key operational parameter. Necessary amendment proposals are included in the Finance Bill, he said.

Chief economist Abheek Barua, HDFC Bank, said that under normal circumstances

a modest slippage in the fiscal deficit this year and the deviation from earlier outlined target of 3 per cent would seem fair and sensible. “But given the current nervousness in the bond market, perhaps a more aggressive fiscal consolidation was required,” he said.

Principal economist Aditi Nayar, rating agency ICRA, said that the revised estimate for the revenue deficit for FY2018 is sharply higher than the budgeted level, which is a cause for concern.

“Moreover, the capital expenditure for FY2018 has been revised downward by 364 billion, entailing a 4 per cent contraction over the level for FY2017 and a concomitant worsening of the quality of expenditure and the fiscal deficit,” she added.

IMPORTED ITEMS THAT WILL BECOME COSTLIER

Popular brands of smart phones like Apple iPhones and Google’s Pixel could be costlier by 3-4 per cent as the government hiked Customs duty on mobile phones to 20 per cent, market watchers said after the Budget

Mobile phones

Silver

Gold

Vegetable, fruit juices, including orange and cranberry

Sunglasses

Miscellaneous food preparations other than soya protein

Perfumes and toilet waters

Sunscreen, suntan, manicure, pedicure preparations

Preparations for oral dental hygiene, denture fixative pastes and powders; dental floss

Pre-shave, shaving or after-shave preparations,

Deodorants, bath preparations, depila-

tories, perfumery

Truck and Bus radial tyres

Silk Fabrics

Footwear

Coloured gemstones

Diamonds

Imitation jewellery

Smart watches/wearable devices

LCD/ LED TV panels

Furniture

Mattresses

Lamps

Wrist watches, pocket watches, clocks

Tricycles, scooters, pedal cars, wheeled toys, dolls’ carriages, dolls, toys, puzzles of all kinds

Video game consoles

Articles and equipment for sports or outdoor games, swimming pools and paddling pools

Cigarette and other lighters, candles

Kites

Edible/vegetable oils such as olive oil, groundnut oil

LIST OF IMPORTED ITEMS SET TO BECOME CHEAP

Raw cashew nuts

Solar tempered glass or solar tempered glass used for manufacture solar panels/modules

Raw materials, parts or accessories used in making cochlear implants

Select capital goods and electronics such as ball screws and linear motion guides





DMK president M. K. Stalin on Thursday began his marathon meetings at Anna Arivalayam, with party cadres to strengthen the DMK

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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City

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Take part in events that enlarge your vision of the world & enable you to play a part in improving it

—Banwarilal Purohit
TN Governor



SHORT TAKES

Man held for rape of minor

Chennai: City police have arrested a 30-year-old man for allegedly sexually abusing a schoolgirl in Teynampet, on Thursday. According to police, S. Ilamaran (30), a native of Mandaveli, is a friend of the victim's family for the last past 10 years. On January 26, the family members had left for Kerala to attend a family function. Since their 17-year-old girl, a plus-2 student had examination she was left to stay with her classmate. Ilamaran dropped the family at Central railway station and came back home. He asked the victim and her friend to stay in different rooms, while he stayed in the hall. During midnight he allegedly stepped into the girl's room and raped her. He threatened her not to disclose the matter to her parents and repeated his act for five days. Based on a complaint from the victim's mother, Pondy Bazaar police have registered a case under Pocso Act and women harassment case and arrested Ilamaran.

3 held for selling highways' land

Chennai: Central Crime Branch (CCB) police have arrested three persons including a woman for selling land that belongs to state highways department on Thursday. The police said that the state highways department had acquired land in Korattur for the inner-ring road project in 1987. Meanwhile, accused Varatharajan allegedly registered the land in the name of Vanaja of Shenoy Nagar and 5 others. Subsequently, Vanaja sold the land worth ₹1.35 crore to Shanthi of Shenoy Nagar. Knowing that the land had been sold to her in a fraudulent manner, Shanthi approached the police and a case was registered. The CCB police on Thursday, arrested Vanaja, A.D. Murugan and D. Thilak all residents of Shenoy Nagar. The search is on to nab other, the police said.

Test bed to help independent researchers

From P1

"It will enable technology developers across the country, particularly the start-ups to live-test their products for compliance and performance by connecting to the test bed. It is expected that several start-ups will emerge from this nationwide effort to build next-generation wireless technologies based on our own IP," he added. "The 5G network can increase the data rate of 4G about 1000 times and the battery life will be 10 times more. We cannot imagine how the traffic would be in the new technology. The test bed will help to validate the new technology," said Professor M.Meenakshi, ECE department at Anna University. She further said the new test bed will be useful to independent researchers working in the city and help them to validate their research. L.SenthilKumar, a research scholar in wireless technology said, "India's contribution to 3G and 4G technology is limited. But, in 5G technology, many researchers are working in the areas like Internet of Things and Software Defined Networking. It will help to develop the technology in our labs."

7 cases against accused pending in various police stations

Dharmapuri man held for ₹2 cr medical seat racket

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

In yet another medical admission racket in the state, the city police have arrested a Dharmapuri man for allegedly duping ₹2 crore from parents, promising their children medical seats.

One of the victims, Anitha of Chennai had approached the Chennai police commissioner seeking action against a man who duped her of ₹35 lakh. In the complaint, Anitha alleged that she had given money to R. Rajeshwaran (38), Aasiriyar Colony of

Rajeshwaran had promised parents MBBS seats in places outside Tamil Nadu. He had collected ₹2 cr from them

Dharmapuri in 2015 on different occasions.

Rajeshwaran had promised to get Anitha's son an MBBS seat in Pune-based medical college, according to the complaint.

But Rajeshwaran failed to get the medical seat and he allegedly threat-

ened Anitha when she asked her money back.

Following the complaint, the Central Crime Branch (CCB) had registered a case and is investigating. Meanwhile, Rajeshwaran had absconded, the police said.

During the investigation, it came to light that Rajeshwaran had allegedly duped many parents in different parts of the state.

"He would promise the parents MBBS seats in medical colleges functioning in other states. There are 7 cases pending in various police stations against

Rajeshwaran," a police source said.

The accused Rajeshwaran, using the same modus operandi, had allegedly duped Shahul Amed of Virudunagar of ₹40 lakh and Mathi Mohan of Myladurai of ₹37 lakh.

"There are complaints of cheating from Sugumari of Coimbatore (₹35 lakh), Kasinathan of Ramanathapuram (₹35 lakh), Nelson of Chennai (₹20 lakh) against Rajeshwaran," the police added.

The special team arrested Rajeshwaran at Dharmapuri on Wednesday, the police said.

Plea filed to recover losses from bus strike

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

Residents of Chennai have approached the Madras high court to direct the state government to take immediate steps to recover losses incurred by the state due to the recent bus strike from the transport corporation employees.

The petitions filed by N. Jnardhanan and M. Muthukumar are likely to come up for hearing before the First Bench comprising Chief Justice Indira Banerjee and Justice Abdul Quddus on Friday.

In their petitions, they submitted that transport employees' unions can act only in accordance with law, but the recent actions of the unions in resorting to strike has not only affected the public at large, but also incurring financial loss to the transport corporations. The workers have withdrawn their strike after the intervention of the high court.

But the government has now passed the burden of heeding to their demand on the people by increasing bus fare. If the losses incurred were allowed to be borne by the government or passed on to the public through bus fare hike and tax, it would set a bad precedent to other government employees, they added.

● If the losses incurred were allowed to be borne by the govt. or the general public through bus fare hike and tax, it would set a bad precedent to other govt. employees

Amrutha wants to grab Jaya's property: Deepak

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

Contending that the design of the story made by Amrutha, who claimed that she is the daughter of former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister late J. Jayalalithaa, seems to be a plot hatched by her to grab the properties of late Jayalalithaa, J. Deepak, nephew of Jayalalithaa has informed the Madras high court that the present petition is filed with the ulterior motive of damaging the dignity and reputation of Jayalalithaa and also to get unlawful enrichment by claiming such false identity.

Justice S. Vaidyanathan before whom the counter affidavit was filed, posted to February 20, further hearing of the case.

Denying all the allegations made by Amrutha, Deepak submitted that his grandmother Sandhya had one son, namely Jayakumar and one daughter Miss Jayalalithaa. As such the claim of the petitioner that late Miss Shylaja was the sister of Jayalalithaa was utterly false. It was from this false story, the petitioner was taking her lead to fabricate her untenable claims in the affidavit, he added.

He said the petitioner's mother (Shylaja) was facing a defamation case for claiming that she was the sister of late Jayalalithaa and the said case was filed by the state government while Jayalalithaa was the chief minister, he added.

Referring to Amrutha's prayer, he said the last rites to be per-

formed as per the followings of a particular community depend upon the circumstances. "I took part in the burial of Jayalalithaa and I performed all the last rituals in the presence of several neighbours and cabinet ministers, according to the Vaishnava Iyengar Brahmin community in Poes Garden and also at the burial site. The reason assigned in the affidavit that the petitioner approached this court only to perform the last rites as per the community tradition is not true", he added. He said the petitioner was not entitled to seek the relief of the DNA test and this was not the appropriate forum to seek such relief since so many disputed questions of facts have to be proved before granting such relief.



TRYING BEST

Government school students take part in a dance competition organised by Government Museum at Egmore on Thursday.

—DC

HELIUM CYLINDER BLAST

Victim's parents seek action against school

DC CORRESPONDENT
VELLORE, FEB. 1

A plus-2 student was killed and another student was severely injured when a helium cylinder blasted at the CMC Ground in Bagayam on Wednesday. V.Jitesh (17), son of Velu. Jitesh, was a plus-2 student at Shanthi Niketan Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Sathuvacheri. Jitesh and his friends had gone to the CMC Ground to participate in the school's sports day event. The mishap happened around 4.30pm when a cylinder kept in the ground to fill helium gas into balloons blasted and flew in the air for over 100 metres and tore apart a plastic water drum and hit a two-wheeler before smashing Jitesh's head, killing him on the spot. Another student Naveen, a plus-1 student, sustained

● A cylinder kept in the ground to fill balloons with helium gas blasted at around 4:30 p.m. According to police, the cylinder was used sans any authorisation

severe injuries and multiple fractures and is admitted to CMC hospital. The family of Naveen submitted a petition seeking action against the school management to the district administration. According to the police officials, the cylinder was used without any authorisation. The cylinder owner, Ganapathi, a resident of Murugan Kovil street at Karugamputhur, fled from the spot after the incident. However, the Bagayam police had registered a case and are investigating.

2 more held in polytechnic recruitment scam

Chennai: The cyber crime wing of the central crime branch (CCB) of the Chennai police has arrested two more accused in connection with the alleged scam in the recruitment of lecturers in government polytechnics in the state. The arrested were identified as Nathan (45) of Chitlapakkam and Paramasivam (35) of East Tambaram. Both the arrested remained absconding. Nathan had been attached to the firm that processed answer sheets and worked as a scanner,

according to police.

Earlier, the police had arrested Sheik Dawood for allegedly manipulating the list of the selected candidates. Also, police had arrested Ganesh, a call taxi driver and others. The action has been initiated after Teacher Recruitment Board (TRB) member-secretary Uma filed a complaint with CCB. The police have registered cases against 156 in link with the scam. After TRB examination, at least 230 candidates got fake marks on the OMR sheet. —DC

Arrest order for vessel at Kattupalli port

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

The Madras high court has ordered the arrest of the vessel, MV ZIM XIAMEN, presently lying in Indian waters at the port of Kattupalli, Chennai, till February 7.

Justice C.V. Karthikeyan passed the interim order on January 31 while ordering notice to the owner of the vessel and also the Kattupalli port authorities on an application arising out of a suit filed by Kumar Alangaram Fernando. According to the appli-

● Ship's company had discharged a seaman without the plaintiff, damages for injury

cant, he has been employed by the group, which owned the present vessel and other vessels from 2007.

He was on board the vessel MV WOODGATE, as part of his job he was asked to remove the fishing net entangled in the propeller manually, a job which was executed by him and in the

process, he had injured his lower back due to the conditions in which he had to carry out the work, he added.

He said medical attention had been denied to him by the owners of the vessel. Now, he had received information that another vessel belonging to the same group MV ZIM XIAMEN, had berthed at Kattupalli port on January 31. According to the schedule forwarded, the vessel was scheduled to leave on February 1, he added.

His counsel S. Vasudevan submitted that Seaman,

who has worked diligently and tirelessly had been rudely cast away by the owners of the ship. He insisted that unless restraining orders were passed against the vessel, it would be very difficult to recover the amount due to the applicant, he added.

The judge said the documents filed substantiate the facts that the plaintiff was actually employed. He was given a work contract. There was an agreement for such employment.

The work contract also stipulated payment of compensation in case of perma-

nent disability or personal injury.

A certificate of the hospital giving his present medical condition has also been enclosed as a document.

"These documents clearly show that the plaintiff has made out a prima facie case to seek the relief sought. Irreparable hardship would be caused if the vessel, which is now lying at Kattupalli port is not restrained by an order of the court since the representations of the plaintiff have not been heeded by the defendant (owners of the vessel)", the judge added.



TWO WHEELER SCHEME

Women make a beeline to apply for new driving license, following state's announcement of Amma Two Wheeler Scheme.

—DC

CBCID to probe fake currency, gun trade

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

The illegal gun trade and fake currency case, which reportedly involves Pakistan's intelligence agency ISI has been transferred to CBCID for further investigation.

The city police, after a 'stunt-filled' chase in Tiruvottiyur railway station, had nabbed K. Kamal of Tirumangalam and J. Pradeep of Perambur on January 29. The police also seized 5 pistols and ₹4 lakh fake currency from their possession.

The police investigation had led to Rafique, a prisoner in Puzhal central jail. Further interrogation with Rafique had led the police to Zakeer Husain, who was arrested for alleged links with the ISI.

With the case entangled in well-established inter-

national networks, DGP (Law and Order) T.K. Rajendiran handed over the case to CBCID on Thursday.

The documents related to the case would be given to CBCID on Friday, a police source said.

Another accused surrenders: Chennai, Feb 1: In a turn of events, another accused in fake currency and gun trade case, S. Sathish of Perambur had surrendered before Ambattur court on Thursday.

The city police have been on a search for Sathish who had absconded. However, Sathish appeared before Ambattur magisterial court, where magistrate Anitha Anand ordered to lock him in judicial custody.

Sathish is a close aide of the Pradeep and Kamal, the other accused in the case, the police said.

I-T RAIDS ON HOUSES OF 15 INDUSTRIALISTS

Salem: In a surprise development, income tax (I-T) officials raided houses of 15 industrialists in Salem and Namakkal districts late on Wednesday night.

According to official sources, a private marriage hall at Andakalurgate near Rasipuram in Namakkal district is being run by 15 industrialists as partners. However, they had not submitted details regarding their income from the property.

Meanwhile on Wednesday, 17 teams comprising 50 officials from Salem Income Tax Commissionerate launched surprise checks late last night. The houses of 12 industrialists in Namakkal district and three houses in Salem district were searched till early hours of Thursday.

—DC

BPCL to pay ₹2 lakh, hand over property to owner

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

Condemning the conduct of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) for trying to usurp a property in Tiruvallur district, which was given on lease to it by the owner of the property way back in 1963, the Madras high court has imposed a cost of ₹2 lakh on BPCL.

Dismissing the second appeal filed by the BPCL and allowing a petition from R. Sivaprakasam, owner of the property, measuring 15, 000 sq.ft, Justice S. Vaidyanathan directed the BPCL to pay the cost for Sri Balagurukulam Primary School in Villivakkam within 30 days.

According to petitioner, his grandfather R.R.S. Ekambaram leased out the property in favour of M/s Bhurma Shell Oil Storage and Distributing Company of India for 20 years from October 1, 1963, and the rent was fixed at ₹75 per



quarter. Thereafter, the company was taken over by the Central government and the statutory corporation was formed on January 24, 1976, and BPCL had continued as lessee after 1976 till October 1, 1983, on the same terms. His grandfather executed a registered will dated May 5, 1988, bequeathing the property in his favour. The lease was further renewed till 2003 as per the terms of the contract.

He was willing to renew the lease at ₹64000 per month rent, instead, BPCL filed a suit seeking renewal and it was dismissed and even the appeal was dis-

missed. He also filed the present petition to cancel the explosive license granted to BPCL.

The judge said even assuming that the lower appellate court has failed to take into consideration clause of the document dated December 5, 1995 (lease), BPCL will not be entitled to any relief, as renewal was not a matter of right. Further, the second lease was not permissible. "As there is no renewal of an explosive license, BPCL cannot continue its business in the place of occupation", the judge added. The judge said BPCL was a 'state' within the meaning of Article 12 of the Constitution, which was amenable to the writ jurisdiction of this court. Hence, this court was of the view that BPCL has to hand over possession of the property within 45 days, otherwise, it was open to the petitioner to enter into the premises and take possession of the property, the judge added.

Cops foil self-immolation bid at collectorate

Coimbatore: Khaja Hussein, a resident of Selvapuram Housing unit attempted self-immolation at the district collectorate here on Thursday by pouring kerosene on him. However, alert police men on duty at the campus doused him with water and prevented Khaja from taking the extreme step. When he was questioned about

the motive behind the attempt, he said that an auto rickshaw stand that started to function before his house has also impacted business of a petty shop that he owns and runs. When officials failed to take action after he filed repeated complains, Khaja attempted the extreme step.

—DC



State health minister C. Vijayabaskar will inaugurate a mobile food-testing lab on DMS campus in Chennai on Friday

6 The Railways has expressed interest in using coir wood to make seats and berths in coaches

— C.P.



Radhakrishnan
Coir Board chairman

SHORT TAKES
4 get life term for murder in Ooty

Ooty: Four persons, including a woman, have been convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering two persons here five years ago. As per the prosecution, there was a previous animosity between one Franklin (22) and his neighbour Nagaraj, in old Ooty area, over some issues. In April 2013, when Franklin came in a motorbike and parked it near a place where Nagaraj (52) and his son Jayashankar (28) were standing at Old Ooty area, a quarrel erupted between them. On hearing the verbal battle between them, Nagaraj's wife Prema (47) and Franklin's uncle Arul Dass (40), a TNEB line-inspector, came to the spot. While the quarrel intensified, Nagaraj, his wife Prema, their son Jayashankar and one Krishnamurthy (31), a friend of Jayashankar, allegedly stabbed Arul Dass and Franklin by using broken bottle pieces. While Arul Dass succumbed to injury at the spot, Franklin died in the hospital. Police here arrested all the four accused in the case. The Mahila court here which heard the case sentenced all the four accused to life imprisonment and slapped a fine of ₹3, 000 on each.

History-sheeter detained under Goondas Act

Tiruchy: City Police Commissioner A. Amalraj ordered the detention of a 32-year-old history-sheeter under Goondas Act at Tiruchy on Thursday. A police release said, the detenu Baskar alias North D Baskar of Budalur in Thanjavur district faced 26 criminal cases including a few murder cases in Tiruchy, Pudukkottai, Nagapattinam, and Thanjavur districts. He was recently arrested by the Woriyur police in connection with a waylaying case and lodged in the Central prison, where he was served the order today.

HC DIRECTS AADHEENAM MUTTS TO SUBMIT PROPERTY DETAILS

DC CORRESPONDENT
MADURAI, FEB. 1

The Madurai bench of the Madras High Court on Wednesday directed to Aadheenam mutts across Tamil Nadu to submit their property details to the Director of Registration department.

A division bench comprising Justices N Kirubakaran and R Tharani also directed the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment (HR & CE) department to submit the report of the last audit they have conducted on the Aadheenam mutts' properties.

■ Madurai bench directs state to act within two weeks
Give funds for carbon dating Adhichanallur artefacts: HC

DC CORRESPONDENT
MADURAI, FEB. 1

The Madurai Bench of the Madras High court on Thursday directed the Tamil Nadu government to allocate funds for sending artefacts unearthed at Adhichanallur for carbon dating within two weeks time.

Retired archaeologist Sathiya Moorthy who has overseen the three phase of excavation at Adhichanallur, an ancient archaeological site near Thoothukudi, has informed the court that the artefacts found at the site could be around 4,000 years old.

Recording his submission, the division bench comprising Justices N



Kirubakaran and R Tharani directed the state government to allocate funds for carbon dating to determine the age of the artefacts.

Woman killed, murderer beaten to death

DC CORRESPONDENT
ERODE, FEB. 1

An elderly woman was murdered by her relative near here on Thursday and the killer was beaten to death by the victim's son and some workers on the spot. Police said Thangavel, 52, resident of Thottampalayam village runs a powerloom unit at his home. His neighbour and relative Arumugam used to frequently quarrel with his family. Suspecting a mental disorder in his kin, Thangavel arranged for his treatment at Coimbatore recently.

Meanwhile on Thursday, Arumugam came to Thangavel's home, quarreled with his mother Marammal, 78, and charged Thangavel with making him seem a lunatic in the village. Following an argument, Arumugam assaulted her with iron rod and she succumbed to injuries on the spot.

Thangavel and workers from powerloom unit rushed to the spot on hearing Mariammal's screams, beat Arumugam to death after tying him to a tree.

On information, Kanjikoil police rushed to the spot and recovered both the bodies. Police have taken Thangavel and workers for inquiry. Further investigations are on.

Corpn decides to issue completion certificates

RUDHRAN BARAASU | DC
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

The owners of new buildings in the city have to visit Chennai corporation zonal offices to get completion certificates, as the civic body has made the certificates mandatory for availing service connections.

According to a circular issued by the works department of Chennai corporation recently, new buildings in the categories of 'ordinary building' with four and above dwelling units, ordinary commercial buildings and institutional buildings are entailed to get completion certificates to avail service connections such as electricity water and sewer.

Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) has been issuing completion certificates for special buildings that are more than nine-meters in height.

To build special buildings, the builders or owners have to get building plan approval from the CMDA. Buildings with still plus 2 floors and ground plus one floor and buildings within nine-meter height fall under

To avail service connections for the special buildings, one has to get CC (Completion certificate) from CMDA. Since the corporation has not mandated the CC, some building owners tend to violate the approved plan, which affects the safety of the occupiers/tenants

— SENIOR OFFICIAL
CHENNAI CORPORATION

the purview of the Chennai corporation.

However, Chennai corporation, which issues planning permission for the buildings below 9-meter height, has not been in the practice of issuing completion certificates to them, which resulted in large-scale building violations in the city.

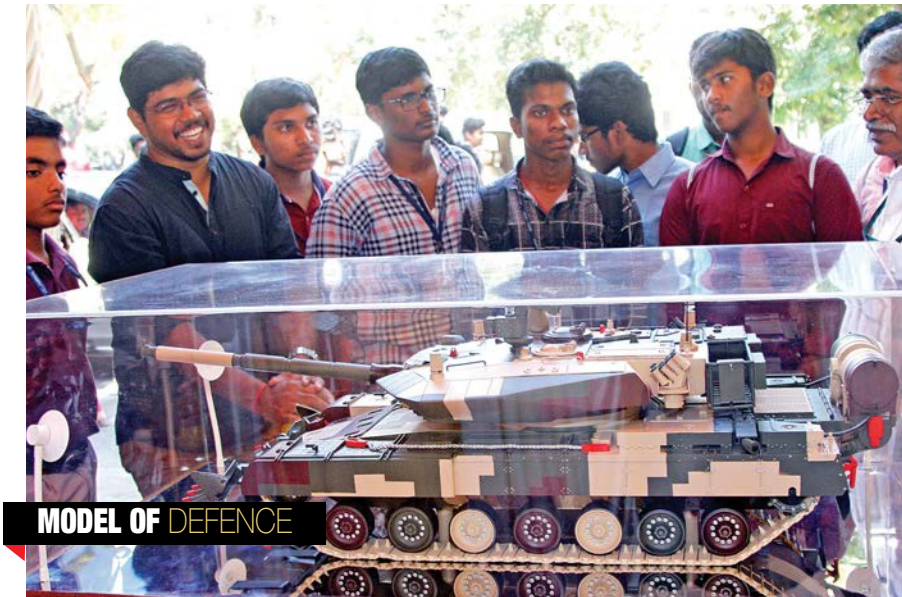
"To avail service connections for the special buildings, one has to get CC (Completion certificate) from CMDA. Since the corporation has not mandated the CC, some building owners tend to violate the approved plan, which affects the safe-

fourth phase.

The judges then asked the public prosecutor whether the state government or ASI will arrange facilities for it. In this regard, the court asked the PP to submit a report on February 18.

On the petitioner's contention about sand mining activities near the site, the Thoothukudi collector who appeared in person, told the court that no sand mining activities were reported in the locality.

Recording his submission, the court directed the collector to erect fencing around the site and also to set up a police outpost there. The next hearing was posted to February 19.



Students visit DRDO exhibition stall during the Kurukshetra an International Techno Management Fest 2018 at College of Engineering Guindy, Anna University, on Thursday.

—DC

ARASU CABLE SEEKS COPS' HELP IN SEIZING MSOs' EQUIPMENT

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable TV Corporation Limited (TACTV) has sent a DO letter to Greater Chennai Police Commissioner seeking seizure of equipment from multi system operators (MSOs) who continue to operate analog cable TV network, on Thursday.

In the letter to A.K. Viswanathan, city police commissioner, J. Kumaragurubaran, managing director, TACTV, said that in compliance with the ministry of information and broadcasting, TACTV, had switched off its analog cable TV signals in Chennai Metropolitan Area from January 31.

"TACTV had distributed 19 lakh free set-top boxes in Tamil Nadu and is progressing fast in digitalisation."

According to the DO let-

ter, the TACTV had granted licences to MSOs. "Some MSOs are continuing with their Analog Cable TV signal transmission in Chennai, which is a violation of Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act, 1995," Kumaragurubaran explained in the missive.

Kumaragurubaran also raised concerns that TACTV's digitalization efforts are being thwarted by the continued Analog Cable TV transmission by some MSOs.

"Government of India requested officers to take stern action against the defaulting MSOs. The city police should take action against erring MSOs under section 11 of the Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act, 1995, which entails seizure of the equipment of the defaulting MSOs," Kumaragurubaran said in the letter.

Stalin interacts with party cadre from districts

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

DMK Working President M K Stalin on Thursday kicked off a nearly two-month long interaction with party functionaries from the village to district levels in all districts of Tamil Nadu as part of the efforts to prepare them to face the local body polls that are expected to be announced soon. The sessions are being held at the Anna Arivalayam here.

Stalin began the meetings by an elaborate interactive session with the office-bearers at multiple levels from the village level upward belonging to Coimbatore City (North and South) and Nilgiris. In a bid to get the confidence of the cadre, Stalin had also announced that a 'complaint box' would be installed at the venue to enable party functionaries to air their grievances against any local leader.

The "complaint box" was prominently placed at the Kalaigalar Arangam at the Anna Arivalayam - DMK headquarters - on Thursday as the interaction began.

The media has been barred entry into the meeting hall.

"Thalapathi heard every one at the meeting, taking



Stalin interacts with cadres.

notes at times. He asked probing questions. He told the gathering of DMK functionaries that he was aware of all their problems and would strive to address each one of them at the earliest. He exhorted them to get ready for the elections", said a DMK senior requesting anonymity.

The interaction with party functionaries comes at a time when the DMK is under tremendous pressure to perform well in the local body elections since this is the first major election that the party will face after Stalin took over as Working President. The pressure has ratcheted after the party forfeited deposit in the December 21 R K Nagar by-poll.

Sources said the district-wise meeting with party functionaries ranging from village secretary to district secretary is a clear indica-

tion that the DMK is serious about facing the local body elections.

"Local body and legislative elections are two different ball games. To face the local body elections, the party needs a strong cadre base and strong unit at the village level. Once the village-level leaders meet with the leader of the party, they get enthused and work towards ensuring the party's victory," another DMK senior said.

The session will end on March 22 with interaction with functionaries from Chennai North and East districts. Polls to local bodies were postponed in October 2016 after the Madras High Court stayed its conduct. Though the High Court has told the SEC to conduct the polls, the election body is dragging its feet citing various reasons.

56-yr-old gets 5-yr RI for sexually assaulting girl

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

The special court for cases under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (Pocso Act) 2012, has awarded five years of RI for the 56-year-old shopkeeper on a charge of sexually assaulting a minor girl. The court also imposed a fine of ₹5,000 on him.

According to Gowri Asokan, special public prosecutor, Ahamed Shabi, 56, of Palavakkam, was running a textile shop in Srinivasapuram market. On March 20, 2016, a girl,

studying class VI in a government school, went to the shop to buy shoe polish. He sexually assaulted the girl, after closing her mouth with his hand.

A person, who went into the shop, noticed the incident and rescued the girl from him.

On returning home, the girl cried profusely and informed the matter to her parents. Immediately, a complaint was registered before all women police station, Mylapore, against Ahamed Shabi for committing an offence under section 9 (m) and 10 of Pocso Act. Chargesheet filed was

filed against him before the court.

However, Ahamed Shabi denied the charges and stated that the case was foisted on him.

On completion of the trial, Judge R.N. Manjula said the prosecution proved the charges beyond reasonable doubt. The judge sentenced Ahamed Shabi to undergo rigorous imprisonment for five years. Stating that the victim, a 10-year-old child, suffered mental agony at her young age, the judge directed the state government to pay a compensation of ₹10,000 to her.

■ Actor to deliver keynote address at 'India Conference' on February 10

Kamal to bare TN's dirty side at Harvard

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

Actor-activist Kamal Haasan will speak on Tamil Nadu at the 'India Conference' of the prestigious Harvard University in the US, where he would most likely bare the state's underbelly of high corruption.

Kamal said he had been invited by Harvard to give keynote address at the 'India Conference' on February 10-the second time he would be delivering a lecture at the university after his talk on freedom of speech in 2016.

"The topic is Tamil Nadu.

I chose to speak on it out of sheer necessity. Our state has sunk to the lowest depth. It is affecting my dignity as a man, even more as a Tamilian. I yearn to see my state rise to the height it deserves. The rise of my state will translate into the rise of my nation," he said in a statement here Thursday.

"This is going to be an engagement with more fortunate minds who availed an opportunity to seek knowledge. A place that dispenses knowledge, for money or free, is still a seat of wisdom. Having their ears, even though only momentarily, is a great



Kamal Haasan

opportunity," Kamal said of his Harvard podium.

The Harvard oration is bound to raise the hackles of many in the ruling party

in Kamal's home state where he is launching a statewide tour as a precursor to political launch.

In his weekly column in the latest issue of Ananda Vikatan, the actor took pains to explain that he was not "anti-Hindu" and took potshots at those portraying him as an enemy of the faith. Kamal, who is set to begin his political journey from the residence of late President A P J Abdul Kalam in Rameswaram on February 21, also said he considered leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, B R Ambedkar and Periyar as his teachers.

"Some people are trying

to portray me as someone who is close to a few and opposed to others. Some also call me enemy of Hindus. How can I be called anti-Hindu when my own brother late Chandra Haasan and my daughter Shruti are devout Hindus? Can I hate them? I respect the decision of people and I respect every other religion," 0 Kamal said.

Noting that he is interested in ushering in new form of political discourse by conducting interactive sessions with the people during his political tour, he vowed to retain the dignity of public platforms from politicians.



Bombay HC says no violation by state by allowing early release of Sanjay Dutt in the 1993 serial bomb blasts case

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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UN list of firms linked to Israeli settlements is a 'waste of time'



— Nikki Haley, US ambassador

IN BRIEF

Bid to molest Ker actor on train

Thiruvananthapuram: An actress who was harassed by a co-passenger in the AC compartment of a train in the wee hours of Thursday was rescued by two good samaritans who were travelling in the next compartment. An actress, who was travelling from Kannur to Thiruvananthapuram in the Mangalore - Thiruvananthapuram Maveli Express, said those in her compartment pretended to sleep while she raised her voice as the man reached out from the opposite berth and touched her lips while she was sleeping around.

PMLA: ED files charges on ex-CM

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday filed a chargesheet in a Delhi court against former Himachal Pradesh CM Virbhadra Singh and his wife Pratibha Singh in a money laundering case. The charge sheet, filed before Special Judge Santosh Snehi Mann, named six accused.

Arunachal CM expands Cabinet

Itanagar: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on Thursday expanded his ministry by inducting Jarkar Gamlin as a Cabinet minister. With Gamlin's induction, the total strength of the Cabinet has risen to 12. The portfolio of the newly-inducted minister would be allocated soon, sources at the Chief Minister's Office here said.

NIA clears 9 held for terror charges

New Delhi: The NIA has cleared all nine persons, arrested in November last year with over ₹36 crore in old currency notes, of terror financing charges, officials said here on Thursday. They had collected the money with the intention of exchanging it, officials in the probe agency said. A special NIA court released them on bail on Thursday, officials said.

BYPOLL UPSET

Congress hands BJP big loss in Rajasthan

■ TMC wins 2 bypolls in West Bengal, BJP finishes second

From page 1

Similarly, difference between Congress candidate Dr. Karan Singh Yadav and BJP's Dr. Jaswant Yadav is close to 2 lakh votes in Alwar, which Bhanwar Jitendra Singh a member of erstwhile royal family and congress president Rahul Gandhi's core team had lost to late Mahant Chandnath of BJP by 2.83 lakhs during Modi wave. Defeat in Alwar is significant also from the view point that it has been at the center of cow politics where three members of minority community have been killed by cow vigilantes or the police. Adding fuel to the fire, the local BJP MLAs here have been attempting polarization by justifying these deaths and questioning increasing Muslim population.

DEATH OF TMC MP'S WIFE NECESSITATES BYPOLL



Congress workers celebrate the party's win in Mandalgarh Assembly seat in Bikaner on Thursday.

— PTI

From page 1

Sajda is the wife of TMC MP Sultan Ahmed, whose death necessitated the bypoll. The BJP's vote in the seat has doubled as the party secured slightly over 1.37 lakh votes in Uluberia in the 2014 Lok

Sabha election. CPI(M) candidate Sabiruddin Mollah finished third securing 1,38,792 votes. In the 2014 Lok Sabha poll the party bagged over 3.69 lakh votes in the constituency. Congress candidate Muddasor Hossain Warsi

emerged fourth by securing only 23,108 votes. In Noapara Assembly constituency in North 24 Parganas district TMC candidate Sunil Singh emerged victorious securing 1,01,729 votes, while BJP's Sandip Banerjee got 38,711 votes. —PTI

NO FRESH VIOLENCE AT KASGANJ

New Delhi, Feb. 1: No fresh violence was reported since Wednesday night in Kasganj which now looks like an impregnable fortress due to the heavy deployment of gun-toting security personnel.

The police headquarters in Lucknow said combing operations had been intensified to nab Naseem and Waseem. The two are brothers of Saleem, the prime accused in the killing of Chandan Gupta. Saleem was arrested on Wednesday. Saleem, who is in his 30s, and his brothers, are accused of killing the 22-year-old college student, police said.

There was heavy deployment of state police, PAC jawans and RAF personnel at Kasganj. —PTI

SC makes public system for allocation of cases

From page 1

Though the CJI has made an attempt to resolve the roster system, sources told this newspaper that the issue raised by the four judges is yet to be fully resolved to their satisfaction. On January 12, four judges Chelameswar, Ranjan Gogoi, Madan Lokur and Kurian Joseph who felt that they were being sidelined in allocation of important cases, alleged that the situation in the Supreme Court was not in order and said many "less than desirable" things have taken place in the last few months.

In an apparent warning, they said lack of impartiality in allocation of high profile cases and con-



stitution of benches with junior judges could imperil India's democracy. Listing of case relating to probe into the death of judge B.H. Loya to a bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra triggered the controversy.

Later it was suggested by the four judges that a committee should be set up with the involvement of future chief justices to prepare the roster, which

should be more transparent and made public.

As per the revised system, the CJI will hear all PILs, election matters, criminal cases, social justice cases, appointment of Constitutional functionaries, matters relating to Commission of enquiry etc. Justice Chelameswar, will hear Labour, Indirect taxes, criminal matters, consumer protection etc.

Justice Gogoi will hear cases relating to labour, tax laws, company law, criminal matters, excise and liquor issues. Justice Lokur will hear cases relating to ecology and environment, mines and minerals, social justice issues, Justice Joseph will hear matters on labour, rent act, criminal cases, family law etc.

WORLD

FIRE KILLS 11 AT HOME FOR ELDERLY

Tokyo, Feb. 1: Eleven people were killed in northern Japan after fire broke out at a home for elderly people with financial difficulties, police said on Thursday.

Television footage showed the three-storey building engulfed in flames and dozens of firefighters battling the blaze in snowy conditions.

Pictures of the aftermath showed the blackened husk of the building, whose roof had apparently collapsed due to the fire. The victims — eight men and three women — were among 16 residents of the facility in Sapporo, Hokkaido, run by a local organisation.

The other five residents escaped, a police spokesman said, adding that authorities were investigating the victims' identities. Kenji Kikai, a local police official, said: "Of the five people who escaped, three people — two men and one woman — were rushed to hospital. The two men were slightly injured and the woman sustained moderate injuries. "They are still hospitalised but the injuries are not life-threatening," added Kikai. Two others escaped unharmed. Police said they had launched a probe into the cause of the fire first alerted at 11.42 pm (local time) on Wednesday via an emergency call.

The accommodation was originally a Japanese inn built around 50 years ago that was later turned into a welfare home. The facility is aimed at supporting elderly people with financial difficulties by offering low-cost accommodation and helping them find work, broadcaster NHK reported.

FBI clashes with Trump, 'gravely concerned' about Russia memo

Washington, Feb. 1: In a remarkably public clash of wills with the White House, the FBI declared on Thursday it has "grave concerns" about the accuracy of a classified memo on the Russia election investigation that President Donald Trump wants released.

The FBI's short and sharp statement, its first on the issue, laid bare a Trump administration conflict that had previously played out mostly behind closed doors in meetings between top Justice Department and White House officials.

"As expressed during our initial review, we have grave concerns about material omissions of fact that fundamentally impact the memo's accuracy," the FBI said.

The agency's stance on the memo, conveyed in a two-paragraph statement, escalates the dispute and means that Mr Trump will be openly defying his hand-picked FBI director by continuing to push for the memo's disclosure. It also suggests a clear willingness by FBI Director Christopher Wray to challenge a president who just months ago fired his predecessor, James Comey.

The FBI statement came the day after Trump was overheard telling a congressman that he "100 per cent" supported release of the memo. —Agencies

TRUMP RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN HAS \$22 MILLION

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP STARTED HIS FORMAL RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN EARLIER THAN ANY OF HIS RECENT PREDECESSORS, AND THAT APPEARS TO BE PAYING OFF.

PRESIDENT REMAINS POPULAR

■ All contributors are small donors who gave \$200 or less.

MONEY MATTERS

■ That's chump change in modern presidential politics and its billion-dollar campaigns, but it still signals Mr Trump's aggressiveness with the election more than two years away.

\$2.2 million the President raised in direct contributions for his campaign during the final quarter of 2017.

■ Another \$3.5 million through a fundraising agreement with the Republican National Committee was raised.



TRUMP LETS PROTECTED SYRIANS STAY LONGER

Washington, Feb. 1: The Trump administration said Wednesday that it would allow nearly 7,000 Syrians to remain in the US for another 18 months, but won't let more Syrian citizens apply for special protection programme.

The decision was a partial relief for aid organisations and advocates for displaced Syrians who had feared President

Donald Trump might end the programme entirely, forcing those in the U.S. to leave or face deportation. Yet those same groups blasted the president for excluding more recent arrivals to the US.

Under a humanitarian programme known as "Temporary Protected Status," thousands of Syrians were allowed to avoid returning to their

war-torn country of origin. The programme was set to expire on March 31, forcing Trump to decide whether to extend.

Homeland security secretary Kirstjen Nielsen said "ongoing armed conflict and extraordinary conditions" justified giving those in the programme another year and a half in the US. —Agencies

Bachchan fumes over cut in Twitter followers

Mumbai, Feb. 1: Megastar Amitabh Bachchan is not happy that his Twitter following has come down from 33 million to 32.9 million.

The 75-year-old actor, in a post joked that he may consider leaving the microblogging site.

"TWITTER you reduced my number of followers.... HAHAAHAHAHAHA! Thats a joke... Time to get off from you. Thank you for the ride... There are many 'other' fish in the sea - and a lot more exciting (sic)" he tweeted.

Superstar Shah Rukh Khan also has 32.9 million followers on Twitter.

Apart from Twitter, Bachchan is also active on photo sharing website Instagram and his official blog. The microblogging site had started an investigation into fake followers in response to a *New York Times* article that alleged



Amitabh Bachchan

■ THE 75-YR-OLD actor joked that he may consider leaving the microblogging site

■ SUPERSTAR Shah Rukh Khan also has 32.9 million followers on Twitter

■ BIG B is also active on Instagram

there were some companies that were indulging in "selling followers" for a price.

Twitter had said, "The tactics used by Devumi on our platform and others as described by today's *NYT* article violate our policies and are unacceptable to us. We are working to stop them and any companies like them."

However, Twitter India refused to comment on the development. With

3,29,41,837 followers, superstar Shah Rukh Khan is now the industry's most followed personality on the microblogging site.

NY Times reported that entertainers, entrepreneurs, athletes and media figures were among those who lost followers in the US. Most of these followers or artificial engagement were bought from a firm called Devumi.

— Agencies

Death for child rapists opposed

DC CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, FEB. 1

Even as the Centre opposed capital punishment to the accused involved in sexual assault of children, the Supreme Court on Thursday called for details of cases pending under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act to examine whether time limit can be fixed for completion of such trials.

A three-judge bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices A.M. Kanwilkar and D.Y. Chandrachud asked petitioner Alakh Alok Srivastava to furnish these details even as he pleaded for capital punishment to child rapists. On a petition filed by him, the bench on Wednesday directed that the eight-month-old girl child who was raped be admitted in AIIMS. During the resumed hearing on Thursday the two doctors of AIIMS informed the court that as per the directions the child was admitted to the Institute and treatment was being given to the child. The court was also informed that the parents, who are daily wage earners, were given ₹75,000 towards interim compensation.

In his petition, Srivastava has sought the urgent framing of guidelines on the investigation and trial of cases of rape of children between 0-12 years of age, to ensure they are completed within six months from the date of filing of FIR.

8-MONTH-OLD RAPE VICTIM SHIFTED TO AIIMS

New Delhi, Feb. 1: The eight-month-old baby, who was allegedly raped by her 28-year-old cousin, has been shifted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) for better medical care, the Centre informed the Supreme Court on Thursday.

The bench, headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra, expressed its concern over the incident and asked the Centre and the petitioner's lawyer to file details of pending cases of sexual assault against children across the country. The local hospital performed the corrective surgery in a professional manner, AIIMS said in its report. —PTI

Petrol bomb hurled at Suu Kyi's lakeside villa

Yangon, Feb. 1: A petrol bomb was thrown at the lakeside Yangon compound of Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi today while she was away from her home, a government spokesman said.

"It was a petrol bomb," spokesman Zaw Htay confirmed, without giving details on a possible motive for a small, but rare attack targeting the Myanmar democracy heroine. The petrol bomb caused minor damage. But the attack on the villa where Suu Kyi was held for long years of house arrest by the former junta is hugely symbolic.

Suu Kyi has increasingly attracted the ire of the international community over her perceived failure to speak up on behalf of Myanmar's Rohingya Muslim community.

Nearly 7,00,000 Rohingyas have fled a brutal military crackdown in northern Rakhine state into refugee camps in Bangladesh since August, bringing with them testimony of murder, rape and arson.

But inside Myanmar Suu Kyi, who swept elections in 2015, is still widely regarded as a heroine by the majority-Buddhist population, who fondly dub her "The Lady".

Many inside Myanmar regard the Rohingyas as illegal "Bengali" immigrants. Suu Kyi was in Naypyidaw at the time of the incident. —AFP

Myanmar graves confirm massacre

Balukhali Refugee Camp (Bangladesh), Feb. 1: The faces of the men half-buried in the mass graves had been burned away by acid or blasted by bullets. Noor Kadir finally recognised his friends only by the colours of their shorts.

Kadir and 14 others, all Rohingya Muslims in the Myanmar village of Gu Dar Pyin, had been choosing players for the soccer-like game of chinlone when the gunfire began. They scattered from what sounded like hard rain on a tin roof.

By the time the Myanmar military stopped shooting, only Kadir and two teammates were left alive.

Days later, Kadir found six of his friends among the bodies in two graves.

They are among at least five mass graves, all previously unreported, that have been confirmed by *The Associated Press* through multiple interviews with more than two dozen survivors in Bangladesh refugee camps and through time-stamped cellphone videos.

The Myanmar government regularly claims such massacres of the Rohingyas. —AP

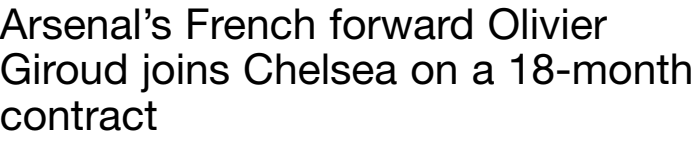
■ THE MYANMAR government regularly claims such massacres of the Rohingyas never happened, and has acknowledged only one mass grave containing 10 "terrorists" in the village of Inn Din.

Rohingyas never happened, and has acknowledged only one mass grave containing 10 "terrorists" in the village of Inn Din.

However, the AP's reporting shows a systematic slaughter of Rohingya Muslim civilians by the military, with help from Buddhist neighbours, and suggests many more graves hold many more people.

"It was a mixed-up jumble of corpses piled on top of each other," said Kadir, a 24-year-old firewood collector. "I felt such sorrow for them."

The graves are the newest piece of evidence for what looks increasingly like a genocide in Myanmar's western Rakhine state against the Rohingyas. —AP



REFURBISHED MMRT ALL SET FOR ACTION

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

The opening round of the MMSC-FMSCI National Racing Championship begins at the refurbished MMRT circuit at Irungattukottai this weekend. The competitors will have the benefit of new and spacious garages following the development work carried out over the past nine months, besides the plush hospitality suites. The championship will feature saloon cars in four categories – the top-end Indian Touring Cars, Indian Junior Touring Cars, Super Stock and Esteem Cup. With all four categories in saloon cars to be run from a common grid, there would be no dearth of on-track action due to hectic jostling for positions.

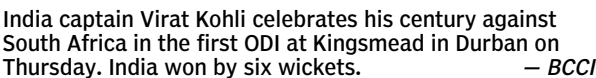
The ITC races this weekend will be without their two prominent drivers, defending champion Arjun Narendran and second-placed Deepak Paul Chinnappa. Their absence will open the doors for others, notably Bengaluru's Ashish Ramaswamy who finished third in the championship last year behind Arjun and Chinnappa, and will again spearhead Red Rooster Performance challenge.

Durban, Feb. 1: Captain Virat Kohli (112) led from the front to help India cater to a six-wicket win in the first ODI against South Africa here on Thursday. The visitors finished the job in 45.3 overs. Ajinkya Rahane lent admirable support to Kohli with 79. Earlier, captain Faf du Plessis sparked with an impressive 120 as he single-handedly took South Africa to 269 for 8.

India's leg-spin twins Kuldip Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal shared five wickets among them in an impressive bowling show but du Plessis ensured that the Proteas have a competitive total on board after opting to bat. Du Plessis scored his eighth ODI hundred after a half-empty Kingsmead Stadium bore witness to South Africa's top-order collapse. The hosts lost four wickets for 51 runs before du Plessis and Chris Morris (37) rescued them with a 74-run partnership for the sixth wicket.

The Protea skipper faced 112 balls from which he hit 11 fours and 2 sixes. For India, Yadav took 3/34 and Chahal returned 2/45 as the duo excelled in their first proper overseas outing, underlining the team management's faith in leg-spin since July last year.

Earlier, South Africa won the toss and opted to bat.



SCORECARD

South Africa: Q. de Kock lbw b Chahal 34, H. Amla lbw b Bumrah 16, F. du Plessis c Pandya b Kumar 120, A. Markram c Pandya b Chahal 9, J. Duminy b Kuldeep Yadav 12, D. Miller c Kohli b Kuldeep Yadav 7, C. Morris b Kuldeep Yadav 37, A. Phehlukwayo (not out) 27, K. Rabada run out Dhoni 1, M. Morkel (not out) 0. **Extras (lb3, nb1, w2) 6. Total (8 wkts, 50 overs) 269.**

FoW: 1-30, 2-83, 3-103, 4-122, 5-134, 6-208, 7-264, 8-268.
Bowling: Kumar 10-1-77-1, Bumrah 10-0-56-1, Pandya 7-0-41-0,
 Chahal 10-0-45-2, Kuldeep Yadav 10-0-34-3, Jadhav 3-0-19-0.
India: R. Sharma c de Kock b Morkel 20, S. Dhawan run out
 (Markram) 35, V. Kohli c Rabada b Phehlukwau 112, A. Rahane
 c Imran Tahir b Phehlukwau 79, H. Pandya (not out), M.S.
 Dhoni (not out). **Extras (lb-6, w-11) 17. Total (for the loss of 4
 wickets in 45.3 overs) 270.**
FoW: 1-33, 2-67, 3-256, 4-262.
Bowling: Morkel 7-0-35-1, Rabada 9.3-0-48-0, Morris 7-0-52-0,
 Tahir 10-0-51-0, Phehlukwau 8-0-42-2, Duminy 2-0-16-0,
 Markram 2-0-20-0.

CITY CLIPS

**St. Bede's
champions**
Brief scores of the
TNCA-City schools U-16
tournament: Final:
Santhome H.S.S 146 in
47.4 overs (Manav
Parakh 3/22) lost to St.
Bede's A.I.H.S.S 150/5 in
42.1 overs (S. Rithik
Easwaran 67*, H. Prashid
Akash 42).

GHSS (Ashok Nagar) have it easy
Brief scores of the
Agarwal Vidyalaya inter-
school cricket tourna-
ment: QF: GHSS Manali
133/9 in 20 overs (Ajaya
Prasanna 85) lost to
Muslim HSS 136/5 in 17.5
overs (R. Saqlain
Mushtaq 34, Ashwin 28).
Sindhi Model 70 in 15
overs (R. Aravindan 6/5)
lost to GHSS Ashok
Nagar 70 for no loss in 10
overs (Nithin Vijay 29*).

Velammal win title
Brief scores of the
Thiruvallur DCA-Apollo
Tyres U-16 inter-school
tournament: Final: DAV
Mugappair 114 in 27.3
overs (V. Srivathsan 36,
P. Saravanan 3/25,
Manav Patel 4/28) lost
to Velammal
International Panchetti
118/6 in 28.2 overs (S.
Santhosh Kumar 51).

Hindustan win basketball crown
Results of Vaspo inter-college sports festival organised by MOP
Valshnav: All finals: Table
tennis: St. Joseph's bt Stellar Maris 2-1.
Basketball: Hindustan bt St. Joseph's 47-28.
Throwball: Ethiraj bt MS 15-6, 9-15, 15-12.

State women's U-23 team trials

The TNCA will conduct trials to select players for the state women U-23 team for the BCCI-south zone one-day tournament at B S Nets M. A. Chidambaram Stadium, on February 10. Players born or after 1.9.1994 are eligible to apply.

CFC treat fans in open training session

SRINIVASA N.V.
CHENNAI, FEB. 1

It is not often Chennaiyin FC fans get to see their team training. But on Thursday evening, the ISL team threw their training session open to reporters and their fans at the SDAT Nehru Park.

As the team went on with their warm-up routine, the 100-odd fans belted out songs that have rocked the Nehru Stadium during Chennaiyin's matches this season.

Even though Chennaiyin don't officially recognise the two notable fan clubs — Super Machans and Blue Stand Blues — the team do help them by giving a discount on tickets. In return, the fans travel with the club for their away games. They were present when Chennaiyin edged out Bengaluru FC 2-1 in an away match earlier this season and will travel to Kochi later this month for the match against Kerala Blasters.

For the fans, the allegiance is natural. "We used to support European clubs because we did not have a team of our own. Now we

support a team which belongs to Chennai and moreover the players can now hear our chants that can spur them."

Captain Henrique Sereno was the first to walk up to greet the fans wanting to repay the faith they have shown in the team with a win in their next home match against Bengaluru FC on February 6 at the Nehru Stadium. "Our win over Bengaluru FC in Bengaluru was important because they are a strong team. All the players in Chennaiyin want to win every match," he said.

At 20, Anirudh Thapa is one of the babies of the team but he has already played nine matches so far with a goal to his name. Anirudh's puny frame doesn't prevent him from playing in a central-defensive role that puts a premium on physical presence. "I never really thought I would get to play so much. Most of the coaches say I have to improve my physique and right now I'm working on it. Our objective is to qualify for the play-offs. The team feels very good mentally and physically," he added.

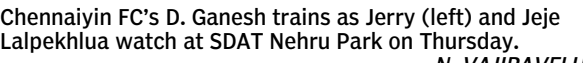
OURS DOWN UNITED 2-0, KIES BRUISED

don, Feb. 1
 enham's Christian
 nsen scored within 1
 nds on Wednesday to
 shadow Alexi
 chez's Premier
 gue debut for
 nchester United, while
 lsea crashed to a 3-
 at by Bournemouth at
 mford Bridge.
 anchester City
 ored the carnage
 and them to march
 enly on, widening
 r lead to an enormous
 oints with a 3-0 victory
 ome to West Brom
 n just 13 games still to
 r.

the build-up to Wednesday's matches was hampered by late moves for the transfer window. Spurs ensured that they were switched back to their original fixtures immediately, stunning Jose Mourinho's side with a performance of attacking verve in a 2-1 win.

RESULTS

sea	0
rmouth	3
son 51, Stanislas 64, 67)	
rton	2
(cott 25, 39)	
ester	1
(71-7en)	
chester City	3
(nandinho 19, De	
ne 68, Agiero 89)	
st Brom	0
castle	1
(celles 65)	
ley	1
(es 85)	
thampton	1
(phens 64)	
hton	1
(rray 14-pen)	
ce	0
ford	0
enham	2
(ksen 1, Jones 28-og)	
chester United	0



—N. VAJIRAVELU



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*Product Applied. Finance Scheme available through select preferred financiers at the sole discretion. Rs. 5999 down payment subject to financier policy. Finance Scheme is for limited time period & financier can withdraw scheme any time without giving prior notice. For more details please contact your nearest Honda dealership
†& ‡Conditions shown in the picture may vary from actual, Application of Combi Brake System on Honda Motorcycles upon engaging the foot pedal. Efficiency of braking depends upon the riding conditions and speed of the vehicle. **Conditions apply.

[illegible]